REGIONAL PRESENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

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Contents

Annexes

ACRONYMS

BDT	-	Bureau for the Development of Telecommunications
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICAO	-	International Civil Aviation Organization
ILO	-	International Labour Organisation
IMO	-	International Maritime Organization
ITU	-	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	-	Joint Inspection Unit
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UPU	-	Universal Postal Union
WHO	-	World Health Organization
WMO	-	World Meteorological Organization
WTDC	-	World Telecommunication Development Conference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMANDATIONS

1.   The regional presence of the International Telecommunication Union, as implemented in the past few years pursuant to resolution No. 17 of the Nice Plenipotentiary Conference of 1989, is relatively still new for an Organization that has been in existence since 1865. More practical experience is required to permit a realistic and accurate assessment of the strengths and constraints of present arrangements, including in particular their input-output ratio, or their overall value-added to the field impact of the Union.

2.   The foregoing notwithstanding, however, the Inspectors, drawing on the long experience and previous reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on the subject of decentralization in the United Nations system, have endeavoured to the extent possible to review for the Council key issues, such as the costs, organization and management of regional presence. The Inspectors find that ITU's regional presence, as of now, generates significant financial savings for the Organization, particularly in salary and mission travel costs. Although the existing structure and coverage of field offices may not be optimally efficient and despite some operational start-up difficulties observed by the Inspectors, the field offices are clearly playing a valuable role that is difficult to quantify, especially in helping to sharpen the Union's sensitivity and responsiveness to specific regional situations and problems of telecommunication development. It would be in the Union's enlightened self-interest to build on this comparative strength represented by its regional presence.

3.   Significant changes that have occurred in the international technical cooperation setting in recent years, and the new programme strategy of the Bureau for the Development of Telecommunications (BDT) for the period 1995-1999, together provide a conducive context for evolving a more coherent decentralized model that forms an integral part of ITU's programme management system, and that is sustained by mutually reinforcing complementarities between the field offices and Headquarters departments. To that end, the Inspectors offer the following main recommendations to the Council:

Recommendation 1: Technical and programme issues

In the progressive development of its regional presence ITU should consider making more explicit the following functions for its field officers, amongst other new priorities:

(a)   Regional presence should to the extent feasible cover both the normative or specialized agency functions of ITU and its technical co-operation or executing agency functions. The existing post descriptions would need some adjustments to be adapted accordingly.

(b)   The field offices should contribute substantive inputs into the preparation and conduct of Regional and World Conferences of the Union, and should be involved fully in the field implementation of the decisions of those conferences.

(c)   Relationships should be further strengthened, wherever necessary, between the field offices and United Nations regional economic commissions and other intergovernmental organizations concerned wholly or partly with the telecommunication development sector.

(d)   ITU should further enhance the role and means of the field offices as channels for the dissemination of technical and management information between the global and regional levels, on the one hand, and national telecommunication administrations, on the other.

(e)   Relationships between the field offices and the private sector and funding organizations should be further clarified and formalized.

Recommendation 2: Management issues

(a)   Consideration should be given to the feasibility and timeliness of consolidating the field offices into single regional offices as in the Arab States, coupled with other structural adjustments that may be necessary in their relations with BDT Headquarters in order to improve overall coherence and co-ordination between the field and Headquarters.

(b)   The present classification of the posts of field officers should be further reviewed to ensure that they fully reflect actual responsibilities, functions and expected outputs of the incumbents as well as the job market situation in specific ITU disciplines; the possibility should also be studied of classifying some of these posts at the P-3 or P-4 level.

(c)   The directives concerning regional presence set forth in ITU document 45/6967 of July 1993 and quoted in paragraph 22 of this report should be fully implemented.

(d)   An official brochure or administrative circular should be published on the role and responsibilities of the Regional Offices, and distributed to all Headquarters officials and Member Administrations. The brochure or circular could be updated periodically to reflect whatever changes may be introduced in the course of time in the regional offices and their relations with the countries and Headquarters.

(e)   The staffing and personnel administration of field offices should ensure that:

(i)   the internationally-recruited professional staff of the field offices reflect the universal character of the Union;

(ii) there is an appropriate system of field staff rotation (e.g. every four years) amongst the different regions and between the field level and Headquarters, to the extent feasible taking into account the need for appropriate language skills;

(iii) the field offices rely increasingly for their programme of work on qualified and competent national professional officers on special services contracts, Junior Professional Officers provided free of charge by some donor countries and short-term consultants for specific assignments, with resources for these purposes being allocated to and managed by the field offices within established accountability guidelines;

(iv) the field offices receive periodic audit and evaluation coverage to ensure that the Union's financial and staff regulations and rules are being effectively aplied at all duty stations;

(v) the Heads of Regional Offices meet yearly or every two years at ITU/Headquarters to discuss common issues of regional presence with relevant Headquarters officials, and that a formal mechanism is established at Headquarters to ensure systematic circulation, follow-up and feedback on the periodic reports of the Regional Directors.

(f) the reorganized/consolidated regional offices should be supplied with an appropriate minimum of experienced ITU support personnel for reasons given in paragraph 19 of this report and in ITU's internal evaluation report.

Recommendation 3: ITU's internal evaluation of its regional presence

The Inspectors further recommend that the Council endorse the conclusions and recommendations of ITU's internal evaluation report on the subject at hand.

Introduction

1.   At its June-July 1993 session the Administrative Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) decided to request the Joint Inspection Unit to conduct "an external evaluation of the ITU regional presence". The present report addresses the Council's request.

2.   The Inspectors note that, independently of the external evaluation requested by the Council, the ITU Bureau for the Development of Telecommunications (BDT) has undertaken an elaborate internal evaluation of its regional presence. The draft evaluation report, which was shared with the Inspectors, covers broadly the same key issues identified by the Inspectors for their own report. The Inspectors concluded therefore that, for more parsimonious use of available resources and time, their report to the Council should complement rather than duplicate the ITU/BDT internal evaluation, which also will be before the Council together with the present report.

3.   In view of the findings of the above-mentioned internal evaluation and of previous detailed JIU reviews of the ITU technical co-operation programme (JIU/REP/75/9 and JIU/REP/86/4), the present report makes a virtue of brevity by avoiding historical and background information about the evolution of ITU's field presence over the years. The Inspectors focus instead on the functioning of present regional arrangements within the context of resolution No. 17 of the ITU Nice Plenipotentiary Conference of 1989, and on how best ITU can use its field presence to promote its universal mandate in a rapidly evolving environment.

4.   The Inspectors observe that the relevant legislative directives of ITU's Plenipotentiary Conferences of 1982 (Nairobi) and 1989 (Nice) are unequivocally firm and clear on:

-       "the need for close and continuing contacts between the Union and all countries in the various geographical regions and the interactive benefits thereof..." (Resolution No. 26, 1982);

-       "the importance of adopting measures to ensure a strengthened and more effective regional presence" (Resolution No. 26, 1982);

-       the fact "that a stronger presence of the Union is required in the regions to increase its efficiency and enhance the assistance to Members and especially the developing ones" (Resolution No. 17, 1989).

5.   In view of these guidelines which have by and large been implemented already by the Secretariat, the Inspectors believe that the principle of ITU field presence through decentralization is in no way subject to doubt. However, decentralization can hardly be considered an end in itself. It is rather a cost-effective means for the execution of programmes and projects. Accordingly, the main objective of the present report is to recommend practical ways and means by which ITU can

achieve a more functional and cost-effective field presence that best serves the interests of the Organization and all its Members, both in the developing and developed countries.

6.   The Inspectors record their appreciation to all those at Headquarters and in the field who co-operated in the preparation of this report.

I. PRESENT SITUATION

7.   At the outset the Inspectors wish to commend the Secretary-General of ITU and his staff on their thorough and candid internal evaluation of the regional presence of the Organization. The evaluation report comprehensively describes the present situation and functioning of the field offices and its conclusions and recommendations are fully shared by the Inspectors. The analysis and observations contained in this chapter are therefore meant to be complementary to the findings of ITV's internal evolution or to reinforce, where necessary, a few key points of special relevance to the effectiveness of the Organization's field presence.

8.   **The financial implications of decentralization** have, very rightly, been one of the central concerns of ITV's governing bodies and Secretariat in their consideration of this subject since 1982. Concern about additional financial implications has also been a major factor in the rather arduous evolution over the years of the Organization's decentralization policy and model, which essentially served its technical co-operation function. Present regional arrangements were themselves premised on the continuing availability and even growth of UNDP's resources for financing project implementation by ITU. But such expectations have not materialized in the light of the new UNDP policy of national execution, coupled with a sharp drop in the number of UNDP-funded telecommunication development projects in the past five years.

9.   While alternative sources of financing ITU-supported projects are increasingly being tapped in some regions, such as cost-sharing agreements in Latin America and the Caribbean, the drastic contraction of the overall volume of technical cooperation activities in other regions has prompted questions about the continuing usefulness and cost-benefits to ITU of its field presence. Notwithstanding the inherent difficulty of quantifying the overall benefits, be they programmatic, operational or otherwise, of United Nations system field offices, the Inspectors believe the cost-benefit question of ITV's field presence is of the utmost importance in considering whether or not it should be strengthened. Accordingly, the Inspectors analyzed the comparative costs of complete centralization at ITU/BDT Headquarters versus present decentralization to the regions. In view of the fact that the infrastructural and operating costs of ITU field offices are currently borne for the most part by the host countries, only salary and travel cost data have been used for the analysis, which is succinctly presented in Table 1, page 4, and in greater detail in Annexes I and II to the present report.

10.   The table shows that the field presence of ITU procures real annual financial savings of Sfr 978,157 attributable to salary cost differences between Headquarters duty station and field duty stations, on the one hand, and additional potential annual savings of over Sfr 300,000 if BDT field missions were conducted mainly from field duty stations rather than from Geneva, on the other. Conversely, complete centralization of staff and mission travel at Headquarters in 1993 would have cost ITU Sfr 1,304,857 more in salary and travel costs. The significant salary cost

**Table 1. <u>Analysis of financial implications of centralization
Versus decentralization in ITU*</u>**

		Unit cost Sfr	Cost of 26 P-5 Officers** - Sfr
1.	**Salary costs in Swiss francs**		
(a)	Annual remuneration of P-5/step V at ITU/HQ (March 1994)	131,201	3,411,233
(b)	Average annual remuneration at P-5/step V at four regional office duty stations	93,580	2,433,076
(c)	Annual salary cost savings from decentralization (regional presence)	37,621	978,157
2.	**Travel costs: BDT travel budget expenditures in 1993, in Swiss francs**		
	By staff located at	No. of missions	Total costs	Average cost

		No. of missions (including internal trips)	Total costs	Average cost
(a)	BDT/HQ	68	329,728	4,849
(b)	Field office	157	533,583	3,397
	BDT TOTAL	225	863,311	3,837
(c)	Cost of 225 field missions if conducted from ITU/HQ (centralization)		225 x 4,849 = 1,091,025	
(d)	Cost of 225 field missions from field office (decentralization)		225 x 3,397 = **764,325**	
(e)	Annual travel cost savings from decentralization (regional presence)		326,700	
3.	**Travel annual savings from decentralization**		
(a)	Salary cost savings (1 (c) above)		978,157	
(b)	Travel cost savings (2 (e) above)		**326,700**	
(c)	Total annual savings		**1,304,857**	

*   A more detailed analisys of this table is presented in Annexes I and II, in US dollars. Travel cost figures are based on BDT's real travel budget expenditure data for 1993, kindly provided by ITU to JIU.

**   There are currently 26 ITU P-5 staff in the field offices, in addition to the four D-1 Regional Directors (see Table 4).

differential between Headquarters and field locations could have implications for the progressive elaboration of ITU's decentralization policy in the years ahead.

11.   **The structure and coverage** of ITU field presence, as shown in Table 2, page 6, consists of 12 offices with a total of 30 staff covering 131 countries in the four developing regions. Eastern and Central Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States are covered from ITU Headquarters. A full half of these offices have only one or two staff members to serve an average of 12 countries.

12.   The present deployment of ITU's field presence has the advantage of broad geographical spread that caters to such subregional specifics like language and cultural differences in each region. However, the infrastructural and support services costs of operating one or two-person offices are relatively higher than for offices with bigger staff complements. But since those costs are not directly financed by ITU, perhaps the most important weakness of one-person offices is their lack of a mutually reinforcing combination of specialist disciplines that are required to develop and design complex telecommunication project proposals for resource mobilisation. Other weaknesses have been pointed out in ITU's internal evaluation of its field presence and the Inspectors concur in the need to examine ways and means of consolidating some of the offices in order to increase their critical mass and impact within the regions.

13.   **The apportionment of ITU's staff and budgetary resources** between Headquarters and the field is reflected in Table 3, page 7, which also shows the ratio of BDT's field staff and budget expenditure in 1993. At present just under 10 per cent of ITU's total professional staff and just under 4 per cent of its total budget expenditure are allocated to its field establishments. Since each United Nations system organization has a unique constitution and mandate as well as organizational structure, there can be no standard, optimally-efficient degree of decentralization across the organizations. Moreover, decentralized resources as vehicles for programme delivery are hardly ever finite or cast in stone. They may be constantly adapted, reduced or expanded to respond more effectively to the shifting requirements of an organization and its constituency.

14.   In that light, ITU's decentralization experience is much too recent and fledgling for the Inspectors to offer any opinion or advice on what can be considered the most cost-effective ratio of decentralization in ITU, which has been in existence since 1865 whereas its decentralization system, as mandated by the 1989 Plenipotentiary Conference, became fully operational only in 1992 when most of the field offices were effectively staffed. While the most appropriate quality and size of ITU's field presence over the years to come will have to be determined by the Organization's internal and external dynamics and new programme thrusts, it may be helpful to draw lessons from other decentralized organizations within the United Nations system.

Table 2. <u>Structure and coverage of regional presence</u>
<u>Versus decentralization in ITU*</u>

Region	Region and area office		No. of staff	Countries covered
Africa	Regional : Addis Ababa		3	7
	Area	Dakar	4	16
		Harare	3	9
		Yaoundé	2	10
Total	4		12	42
Arab States	Regional:	Cairo	5	21
	Area	none	-	-
Asia	Regional	Bangkok	4	20
	Area	Kathmandu	1 (plus 1 Ass. Exp.)	10
		Jakarta	1	9
Total	3		6	35
Latin America	Regional:	Brasilia	3	
	Area	Bridgetown	1	14
		Santiago	1	10
		Tegucigalpa	2	9
Total	4		7	33
Gross total	12		30	131

Table 3. <u>Apportionment of resources in 1993</u>

	1 ITU/total	2 BDT/total		3 Regional presence		
			% of 1		% of 1	% of 2
Professional staff	314	77	24.5	30	9.6	39
Budget expenditure in thousand Swiss Francs	132,610	28,298	21.3	4,700	3.6	16.6

15.   The essentially operational organizations of the United Nations family, namely UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, or UNHCR, have about three-quarters of their staff outposted to the field. Among the specialized technical agencies, only WHO has about 60 per cent of its staff and regular budgetary resources allocated to the field level. FAO, ICAO, ILO and UNESCO have an average of 25 per cent of their saff outposted to the field. While FAO, ILO and UNESCO are relatively larger agencies, ICAO is roughly comparable to ITU in terms of technical specialization, staff size and budget expenditure. Much smaller agencies like IMO, UPU and WMO also have a few of their staff in the field. A more in-depth analysis of comparative approaches to decentralization in the United Nations system is contained in a JIU report on this subject (JIU/REP/92/6 Parts I and II).

16.   **<u>Staffing of field offices</u>:** Because of deadline constraints on the preparation of this report it was not possible for the Inspectors to assess precisely whether the qualifications and competences of the present field office staff fulfilled the job description profiles contained in Annexes III and IV to this report. The Inspectors can only assume that this is the case. As regards the present field posts classification structure, however, the justification for 26 senior field officers, all of them being classified at the same level as the heads of Area Offices, did not seem readily apparent (see Table 4, page 8).

17.   This is an important feature of ITU's field presence which may deserve the Organization's close attention in the future. It needs to be determined whether certain positions may not be more appropriately classified at P-3 or P-4 level by virtue of actual responsibilities, functions and expected outputs, as well as the job market situation in specific ITU disciplines.

Table 4. <u>Grade structure of field professional staff</u>

Level	Number
D-1	4
P-5	26
P-3/4	-
P-1/2	-

18.   Staff composition by regional origin also needs to be corrected in some field offices in order to reflect more fully the universal character of ITU both at Headquarters and in the field. In addition, a policy of staff rotation amongst the regions and between the field and Headquarters would richly diversify the organization's global experience in its telecommunication development work.

19.   ITV's internal evaluation report on its regional presence has quite rightly underlined the need to supply the regional offices with competent support staff experienced in ITV's administrative and financial regulations, rules and procedures. The proposed action certainly will enhance the operational efficiency of the field offices as they might ultimately be reorganized or consolidated, while facilitating the discharge of accountability, in view especially of the fact that:

(a)   UNDP is phasing out most of its previous United Nations common system support functions at the field level;

(b)   Some of ITU Heads of regional offices and its field officers are either new to the Organization or have only limited knowledge of the Union's and United Nations system's administrative and financial systems as well as accountability requirements;

(c)   Support staff seconded by host governments to the field offices also have no knowledge of the Union's personnel and financial regulations and rules;

(d)   The whole range of responsibilities and functions assigned to the field offices as detailed in Annexes III and IV could hardly be performed effectively without an appropriate minimum of highly experienced and competent ITU support personnel from Headquarters.

20.   **<u>Responsibilities functions and authority</u>** of field offices are summarized in Table 5, page 10, and presented more fully in Annexes III and IV to this report. Also, ITU's internal evaluation report addresses some of the main constraints inhibiting the optimal efficiency of the field offices, leading to their reduced or uneven impact in the regions.

21.   The Inspectors' findings underscore the observations in ITU's own evaluation, especially as regards a major confusion at Headquarters and in the field about authorities that have been effectively delegated and those that are not. Table 5 and the relevant job descriptions in the annexes would seem to suggest, for example, that the field Heads of offices and officers have the freedom to perform all the responsibilities and functions listed in their post descriptions. That is not the case in reality because, as stated to one of the Inspectors by the Regional Heads of offices, the post descriptions are only the ideal and hardly more, since many of the responsibilities and functions are still discharged from Headquarters as in the past, prior to 1989. A major question that concerns the effective and full use of the organization's field presence is whether the frequency and pattern of field missions by Headquarters staff have significantly changed as a result of the creation of field offices. These offices cannot be cost-effective unless they are fully and effectively used by the Union as a whole in the conduct of business at the field level.

22.   Field office staff complain of being constantly bypassed by communications and staff from Headquarters to countries under their jurisdiction. Seminars, workshops and other meetings in their countries of assignment continue to be organized directly by Headquarters staff, with no invitation to field office staff to participate in such meetings. Yet an internal Policy Paper prepared in July 1993 on ITU's field presence (document 45/6967) states that:

> "... *the changing requirements by necessity, mean progressive and substantial devolution of authority and responsibility from Headquarters to the field together with a corresponding accountability of the latter in a suitably, institutionalized regional format. A high degree of decentralized functioning, coupled with essential overall control, direction and evaluation by Headquarters should be the basis of these arrangements* ".

23.   The Inspectors recommend that these guidelines be implemented inter alia by making all ITU Headquarters departments as well as Member Administrations fully aware of the responsibilities and functions of the field offices, the formal or advisable channels of communications between Headquarters and Members of the Union through field offices or with copy to the latter, the specific authorities that have been delegated to the field offices, and the organization of periodic meetings of the Regional Heads of offices at ITU Headquarters to seek ways of solving common problems of field presence.

Table 5. <u>Autority delegated to Regional/Area Offices</u>

Autority		Delegated?	
		yes	no
(a)	Participation in interagency programming missions	X	*
(b)	Project development and design	X	
(c)	Preparation of investment feasibility studies	X	
(d)	Approval and signature of project documents	X	*
(e)	Technical backstopping and evaluation of projects	X	
(f)	Development and support of cost-sharing projects	X	
(g)	Development and support of projects involving technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC)	X	
(h)	Mobilization of funds for ITU technical co-operation programme	X	*
(i)	Organization of seminars and workshops within regions	X	
(j)	Dissemination of technical and related information to regional Member States	X	*
(k)	Public information and advocacy in the promotion of ITU's constitutional mandate	X	*
(l)	Identification and recruitment of project personnel		X
(m)	Identification and recruitment of short-term consultants for specific field assignments		X
(n)	Allocation and placement of fellowships		X
(o)	Technical support to national and inter-country telecom training institutions	X	
(p)	Technical support to regional/subregional telecom organizations	X	
(q)	Specification and procurement of equipment for ITU-supported projects and for Member Administrations		X

*No or only partial delegation of authority, as stated by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Table 5. (continued)

Autority	Delegated?	
	yes	no
Other authorities		
- Approval of travel authorizations within region	X	
- Approval of leave requests for field office personnel	X	
- Approval of field office expenditures within specified budget allotments	X	*
- Approval of revisions to project plans and budgets	X	

24. **The views of some Member Administrations**, interviewed for this report, were broadly similar in their support for the ITU regional presence and related decentralization measures. It was acknowledged that the resources available to the field offices, especially for travel purposes within their respective areas of jurisdiction, did not seem to offer them much scope for action. The significant decline in the number of ITU-executed projects financed by UNDP in some regions, particularly in Africa, was not considered to justify the scaling back or reversal of the organization's policy of decentralization. It was suggested that ITU should view its regional presence within a global, strategic perspective with clear long-term programme objectives, such as might emerge from successive Regional and World ITU Conferences. It was felt that the prodigious advances as well as transnationalization processes noted in ITU's sector in the past decade, and the rapidly changing character of United Nations system technical co-operation, together warranted closer and sustained ITU support for the telecommunications administrations of the developing Member States, inter alia through an appropriate system of decentralization and delegated authority.

25. **Performance monitoring and control** of field office operations have not yet been fully formalized or instituted as an integral part of ITU's managerial control system, no doubt because the Organization's decentralization experience is still evolving. The ITU internal evaluation service has been reviewing and reporting on the activities and problems of the field offices since 1992.

26. The Heads of regional offices also address bi-monthly reports on their activities to the Director of BDT with copies to the Secretary-General of ITU and the Regional Co-ordinator at (eadquarters. It is, however, not apparent whether these periodic reports are equally shared with the heads of all Headquarters departments as well as with Regional Directors in other regions. It would be useful to formalize the list of all ITU officials, in the field and headquarters, who should be privy to these periodic reports, to standardize their format and technical substance and to establish a mechanism at headquarters for follow-up action and feedback on issues raised in the reports.

27.   Besides the UNDP policies and procedures manual, there appears to be no other written guidelines provided to the field offices to support or facilitate the performance of their assigned responsibilities and functions. Similarly, no training or briefing sessions have been organized so far for field office staff to acquaint them with the proper application of ITU administrative and financial policies and procedures, or to familiarize them with the operation of computer tools which have become indispensable to the efficient management of programmes or utilization of basic management information systems. The Inspectors recommend that these issues should be given due attention in the overall progressive development of ITU's decentralized model.

28.   The Inspectors further recommend that the field offices should benefit from periodic audit and evalution missions to ensure that the Organization's financial and staff regulations and rules are being applied as they should at all duty stations.

II   TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF REGIONAL PRESENCE

A.   The evolving context of technical co-operation

29.   ITU's decentralization policy has until now been conditioned by traditional approaches to technical co-operation and project execution. These approaches are now being overtaken by the rapidly evolving context of international development co-operation as reflected notably by the overhaul of UNDP's technical co-operation policy in the past few years. Increasing UNDP emphasis on national execution and support for policy reforms in the developing countries, coupled with drastic reduction in resource allocations for inter-country activities and the telecommunication development sector, will certainly necessitate new ITU technical co-operation and resource mobilization strategies. Such changes are bound in turn to force a new type of decentralization policy that is less dependent on the traditional executing-agency functions.

30.   Yet another major development likely to carry implications for the future of ITU's technical co-operation with its Member States is the increasing world-wide privatization of services hitherto provided by governments, including telecommunication services delivered mostly until recently by governmental telecommunication administrations, which for long have been ITU's partners in development co-operation.

31.   While most of these changes have in away taken many organizations of the United Nations system by surprise, ITU has the great merit for having anticipated them over the last decade, two major examples being the seminal report of the "Independent Commission for World-wide Telecommunications Development" (1984), and the resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conferences since 1982 emphasizing the need for ITU to strengthen its field presence and its interactions with the developing Member States.

32.   More specifically, the following extract from the keynote statement made by the Secretary-General of ITU to the First World Telecommunication Development Conference at Buenos Aires, 21-29 March 1994, accurately outlines the policy context that the Inspectors believe should shape a new ITU model of regional presence:

●   *"The mission of the ITU is to provide to the international telecommunications community those products and services that are best provided by an international organisation. Many of the traditional technical co-operation activities of the BDT are now provided through national execution, through the development agencies and through private sector consultants. The ITU may still have a comparative advantage in some areas of project execution, but we must be prepared to reshape and reduce our role in this area in response to the declining demand for these services.*

- *"On the other hand, the ITU's role in information exchange and know-how has become much more important over time, notably through the organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences such as this, through the gathering of telecommunication indicators and the publication of reports, and through the organisation of exhibitions and trade shows such as Africa TELECOM'94 which will take place next month in Cairo. Until recently, little of the work of BDT has been published, but we are now committed to changing this policy and introducing far more transparency into the operations of the Development Sector.*

- *"The services that the BDT can offer in terms of human resources development, regulatory/policy advice, project identification and definition, and bringing together project planners and potential investors are now more in demand than ever. In order to respond to these new demands, we need to optimise the use of resources available to the BDT and to build upon our existing core competencies.*

- *"Finally, the BDT must focus more of its efforts on the requirements of the Least Developed Countries. One of the clear messages from the World Telecommunication Development Report is that most of the middle income developing countries are now in a position to attract investment finances on the commercial market and to self-finance their remaining needs. The BDT's efforts must therefore concentrate on those countries where the needs are greatest and the available resources least. "*

33. The type of regional presence or decentralization policy that is likely to be shaped by the new departures outlined above for ITU by its Secretary-General will obviously require technical as well as administrative adjustments to the existing system of decentralization.

B. Technical and programme issues

34. ITU's future regional presence could be further strengthened technically through the following measures, amongst others:

(a) the post descriptions of Regional Officers should be adapted to enable them to carry out the full spectrum of ITU's mandate, namely both the technical co-operation and the normative functions, as well as the priorities of the Organization as contained in the new BDT programme strategy for the period 1995-1999 (Buenos Aires Plan of Action);

(b) their substantive inputs into the preparation and conduct of Regional Conferences as well as for the implementation of the decisions of these Conferences should become one of their main areas of concern;

(c)   their relationships with United Nations regional economic commissions and other intergovernmental organizations concerned with telecommunications should be made more explicit, together with their role in promoting technical co-operation among the developing countries;

(d)   their support for national and regional telecommunication training centres and related institutions could be further reinforced;

(e)   their role as channels for technical and management information dissemination between the global and regional levels, on the one hand, and national telecommunication administrations, on the other, could be further strengthened;

(f)   their relationships with the private sector at present suffer from an overall ill-defined ITU policy vis-à-vis the private sector, especially in the context of the growing privatization of the operating functions of national telecommunication administrations. The support of the field offices and ITU in general for regulatory, and strategic management aspects of telecommunications, as well as for the efficient provision of services by private sector operators, could increasingly be in demand.

C   Management of regional presence

35.   The preceding chapter and ITU's internal evaluation report have outlined some of the organizational and operational weaknesses that have constrained the **full** effectiveness of the field offices. The following quotation from the internal evaluation report is especially pertinent:

> *"Regional presence was undertaken without a plan, strategic or otherwise. No criteria were set for choosing the various sites for the Area and Regional offices. No goals were set for the accomplishment or failure of activities, and no budgets were assigned to the offices for programmes or for the administration of those offices".*

36.   Decentralization in ITU is still a learning process and as such present regional arrangements have not yet fully become an integral part of the Organization's management culture. The physical redeployment of staff from Headquarters to the regions did not by itself amount to decentralization, which embraces issues of organizational structure as well as those of managerial systems, processes and control.

37.   The outposting of most of the staff of the former Technical Co-operation Department while leaving fully intact other BDT Headquarters services, especially the administrative Programme Support Department, has led to confusion about lines of authority and co-ordination between the field and Headquarters. The present organization of BDT/HQ could be made more optimal in its relations with the field offices.

38.   The Inspectors offer no ready-made reorganization plan which will depend on the new approaches to be devised for implementing the BDT work programme for the period 1995-1999, or the WTDC Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The following improvement measures could however be taken into account in the reorganization process:

(a)   Field presence should be considered as an additional advantage in the worldwide promotion of ITV's constitutional mandate. As such decentralization should in no way be perceived as "weakening" Headquarters to the extent that Headquarters alone does not constitute the Union. Field presence should evolve in ways that strengthen ITV's global role and reach, and that requires the constant nurturing of dependability, complementarities and mutual support between the field and Headquarters levels.

(b)   The present decentralization system could be further improved by eliminating some reporting levels. The possible consolidation of the field offices into single regional offices as in the Arab States could partly solve the problem. However, some reorganization at BDT/HQ as well may be in order to improve overall coherence and co-ordination between the field and Headquarters. The scope of delegated authority implied in the post descriptions in annexes 3 and 4 would seem to nullify the need for "desk officers" at BDT/HQ.

(c)   The field offices could rely increasingly more for their technical programme of work on new staff categories, such as qualified and competent national professional officers on special services contracts, Junior Professional Officers provided free of charge by some donor countries, and short-term consultants for specific tasks. Resources for these purposes could be managed by the field offices and at the field level, coupled with the necessary accountability guidelines.

(d)   An official brochure or Administrative circular should be published on the role and responsibilities of the Regional Offices, and distributed to all Headquarters officials and Member Administrations. The brochure or circular could be updated periodically to reflect whatever changes may be introduced in the course of time in the regional offices and their relations with the countries and Headquarters.

(e)   The conclusions and recommendations of the ITV's internal evaluation report on its regional presence should be supported by the Council.

III   CONCLUSION

39.   Although the regional presence of ITU, as mandated by the 1989 Plenipotentiary Conference, has been fully operational for barely two years, the Inspectors commend the Secretary-General of ITU for taking adequate and prompt measures to give effect to the relevant resolution of the 1989 Conference. Because it is relatively new, regional presence for ITU is still a dynamic learning process that may take several more years to make ITV's decentralized mechanisms an integral part of the Organization's corporate culture. ITV's internal evaluation of its regional presence, as well as the recommendations in this report, point to the various desirable changes that would be necessary to evolve a new and strengthened model of ITU regional presence.

ANALYSIS OF SALARY COST IMPLICATIONS OF CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION IN ITU

Annual salaries (including post adjustment) for a staff member at the P-5, step V level with two dependants*

(in US dollars per annum)

	Geneva	Addis Ababa	Bangkok	Brasilia	Cairo
Base net salary dependency rate	51,992	51,992	51,992	51,992	51,992
Post Adjustment multiplier (March 1994)	72.8	10.6	23.6	29.0	27.0
Post Adjustment amount	37,850	5,511	12,270	15,078	14,038
Total net Salary	89,942	57,503	64,262	67,070	66,030
Child Allowance	1,270	1,270	1,270	1,270	1,270
Total remuneration	91,112	58,773	65,532	68,340	67,300

		Unit cost (US$)	Cost of 26 Officers (US$)
(a)	Centralization	per annum	per annum
	Annual remuneration of P-5/V at ITU/HQ (Geneva)	91,112	2,368,912
(b)	Decentralization (regional presence)		
	Average annual remuneration of P-5/V at four Regional Office duty stations	64,986	1,689,636
(c)	Annual salary cost savings of decentralization (regional presence)	25,126	679,276
	In Swiss Francs (at exchange rate of 12/04/94)	37,621	978,157

* Source: Financial Resources Management Service, United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), at the request of the Joint Inspection Unit.

Annex II

ANALYSIS OF SALARY COST IMPLICATIONS OF CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION IN ITU

1.   **Centralization at ITU/HQ**: **Total Costs** of ten[*] return trips from Geneva to each of the four regions each year.[**]

	US$
Africa	= 32,550
Arab States	= 20,160
Asia	= 38,350
Latin America and the Caribbean	= 45,300
Aggregate Total per year	136,350 (for 40 field missions)

2.   **Decentralization to the regions (regional presence)**: Total costs of nine* return trips from the regional offices to the same destinations within the regions**

	US$
Africa	= 12,250
Arab States	= 5,250
Asia	= 8,000
Latin America and the Caribbean	= 12,750
Aggregate Total per year	38,250 (for 36 out-of-station missions)

3.   **Annual travel cost savings from decentralization**:   US$ 98,100
                                                              Sfr 141,264.-

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[*]   Ten field trips are required from ITU/HQ to cover ten countries, whereas nine such trips are required to cover the same number of countries from each regional office, which already covers the country hosting the regional office on a day-today basis. The possibility exists of covering several countries in a single trip and the reduced travel cost implications will be comparatively the same for both ITU/HQ and the regional offices. Also, mission subsistence allowance is not factored into this analysis as this cost element is likewise more or less the same for both Headquarters and field-based staff.

[**]   See following pages of this Annex for detailed costs.

Annex II (continued)

(a) Cost of full economy ticket in March 1994 from
Geneva to ten selected destinations in each region[*]

1. AFRICA

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Geneva	Addis Ababa (regional office)	=	2,700
Geneva	Abidjan	=	3,250
Geneva	Bamako	=	2,750
Geneva	Dakar	=	2,700
Geneva	Harar	=	3,750
Geneva	Lagos	=	2,900
Geneva	Luanda	=	3,850
Geneva	Nairobi	=	3,250
Geneva	Windhoek	=	3,850
Geneva	Yaoundé	=	3,550
	Total	=	32,550
	Average cost:	=	3,255

Annex II (continued)

2.   ARAB STATES

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Geneva	Cairo (regional office)	=	1,910
Geneva	Algiers	=	780
Geneva	Amman	=	1,850
Geneva	Baghdad	=	2,450
Geneva	Bahrain	=	2,850
Geneva	Beirut	=	1,850
Geneva	Damascus	=	1,850
Geneva	Kuwait City	=	2,700
Geneva	Jeddah	=	2,650
Geneva	Rabat	=	1,270
	Total	=	20,160
	Average cost:	=	2,016

3.   ASIA

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Geneva	Bangkok (regional office)	=	3,550
Geneva	Beijing	=	3,850
Geneva	Colombo	=	3,500
Geneva	Hanoi	=	3,850
Geneva	Islamabad	=	3,100
Geneva	Jakarta	=	4,050
Geneva	Kathmandu	=	3,500
Geneva	Manila	=	4,000
Geneva	New Dehli	=	3,100
Geneva	Port Moresby	=	5,850
	Total	=	38,350
	Average cost:	=	3,835

Annex II (continued)

1.   LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Geneva	Brasilia (regional office)	=	4,300
Geneva	Asuncion	=	5,250
Geneva	Buenos Aires	=	5,250
Geneva	Bridgetown	=	3,850
Geneva	Caracas	=	3,800
Geneva	Havana	=	3,200
Geneva	Kingston	=	3,900
Geneva	Lima	=	4,650
Geneva	Montevideo	=	5,250
Geneva	Santiago	=	5,800
	Total	=	45,300
	Average cost:	=	4,530

Annex II (continued)

(b) Cost of travel within the regions on a full
     Economy return ticket to the same destinations

1. AFRICA

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Addis Ababa (regional office)	Abidjan	=	1,550
Addis Ababa	Bamako	=	1,700
Addis Ababa	Dakar	=	1,950
Addis Ababa	Harar	=	1,250
Addis Ababa	Lagos	=	1,250
Addis Ababa	Luanda	=	1,250
Addis Ababa	Nairobi	=	550
Addis Ababa	Windhoek	=	1,350
Addis Ababa	Yaoundé	=	1,400
	Total	=	12,250
	Average cost:	=	1,361.11

2. ARAB STATES

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Cairo (regional office)	Abidjan	=	1,550
Cairo	Bamako	=	1,700
Cairo	Dakar	=	1,950
Cairo	Harar	=	1,250
Cairo	Lagos	=	1,250
Cairo	Luanda	=	1,250
Cairo	Nairobi	=	550
Cairo	Windhoek	=	1,350
Addis Ababa	Yaoundé	=	1,400
	Total	=	12,250
	Average cost:	=	1,361.11

3. ASIA

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Bangkok (regional office)	Beijing	=	900
Bangkok	Colombo	=	750
Bangkok	Hanoi	=	400
Bangkok	Islamabad	=	1,100
Bangkok	Jakarta	=	850
Bangkok	Kathmandu	=	750
Bangkok	Manila	=	750
Bangkok	New Delhi	=	750
Bangkok	Port Moresby	=	1,750
	Total	=	8,000
	Average cost:	=	888.89

4. LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

From and return	To		Cost in US$
Brasilia (regional office)	Asuncion	=	750
Brasilia	Buenos Aires	=	1,000
Brasilia	Bridgetown	=	1,800
Brasilia	Caracas	=	1,450
Brasilia	Havana	=	1,850
Brasilia	Kingston	=	2,050
Brasilia	Lima	=	1,650
Brasilia	Montevideo	=	950
Brasilia	Santiago	=	1,250
	Total	=	12,750
	Average cost:	=	1,416.67

Annex III

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ITU REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Under the administrative direction of the Director of the Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT), and in close collaboration with the Chief of Field Operations Department, serves as Head of the ITU Regional Office for America and the Caribbean and is responsible for planning, organizing and directing the work of the Office. He/she will:

1. Study the telecommunication requirements of the countries in his region and, in close consultation with the officials concerned, identify actions, programmes and projects to enhance the harmonious development of telecommunications of the socio-economic enhancement of the countries in the region.

2. Carry out sectoral studies to assess fully the state of the telecommunication networks and services of a given country and provide general advice for their improvement and further expansion by means of internal and external resources.

3. Assist the countries of his region to formulate a general national and regional technical co-operation programme that may be of interest to bilateral and multilateral development partners.

4. Develop a mechanism to increase the effective development and use of human resources of the region and more specifically to generate dynamic activities and programmes which promote Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC).

5. Direct the preparation and submission of ITU proposals for consideration by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), other funding entities, and Governments concerned, in accordance with the UNDP schedule for country and inter-country programming exercises, taking due account of the state of telecommunications development at the sub-regional and regional levels.

6. Act as principal representative vis-á-vis the UNDP Resident Coordinator(s) assigned to the countries in his region and maintain contact with UNDP Headquarters when necessary as well as telecommunication Administrations in connection with the identification, formulation, preparation, negotiation and implementation of the technical co-operation programme in the region.

7. Supervise, monitor and evaluate the work of experts assigned to field activities and also assist in the nomination and placement of fellows from the region.

8.   Study and propose the total or partial financing of projects by UNDP or other sources, such as Funds in Trust (FIT) or bilateral schemes as appropriate.

9.   Sign on behalf of the Director, BDT, all correspondence addressed to the UNDP Resident Representative and to the ITU Experts and/or consultants assigned to the countries of his region.

10.   Undertake missions within his region to discuss with Government Authorities and UNDP Resident Representatives questions related to technical co-operation activities, such as monitoring the progress of projects and participation in their evaluation.

11.   Establish, develop and maintain, as appropriate, close relations with regional telecommunication organizations, development banks, economic commissions of the United Nations, and other regional and sub-regional institutions that deal with telecommunications, and ensure that any agreements entered into by the ITU with these organizations are implemented.

12.   Organize and/or participate in regional conferences, seminars, special meetings, etc., that are under the responsibility of the Regional Office.

13.   Provide and review information addressed to Headquarters for inclusion in reports on technical co-operation activities in his region for consideration by the ITU, the Administrative Council, Development Conferences, UNDP, recipient Governments, organizations, etc.

14.   Provide appropriate inputs, in respect of his region, to Headquarters concerning promotional activities for development of telecommunications, and assist in follow-up actions, as necessary, within his region.

15.   Co-ordinate, monitor and supervise the activities of the Area Offices operating in his region.

        He/she will also:

1.   Approve and sign, on behalf of the ITU, project documents and revisions when their budget does not exceed US$ 150,000.

2.   Supervise and co-ordinate the measures required for the prospection, recruitment and briefing of experts and consultants.

3.   Study and recommend when appropriate, total or partial project subcontracting. This requires the establishment of terms of reference for the prospection of suitable firms as well

as participation in the evaluation of offers, in the negotiations with the selected firm, and in the award of a contract.

4.   Direct, supervise and assess the work of Area project officers, project managers, subcontractors and other experts assigned to the countries in his region.

5.   Approve the lists of equipment for direct purchase or for submission to the Equipment Selection Panel.

In addition to the above, he/she will:

1.   Refer to the other permanent organs of the Union, through BDT Headquarters, questions and information falling within their competence.

2.   Co-ordinate those activities concerning the countries of his region that may be referred to him by the other permanent organs of the Union.

3.   Provide the developing countries of his region with all relevant information on the organization of global/regional meetings and conferences.

4.   Perform any other task that may be assigned to him by the Director of the BDT.

Qualifications required:

Candidates for this post should fulfil the following requirements:

1.   Advanced university degree in a branch of telecommunications related to the professional activity of the post

or

education in a reputed college of advanced education with a diploma of equivalent standard to that of an advanced university degree in the field of the post.

2.   Suitable experience, normally corresponding to at least 15 years in increasingly responsible positions and preferably including a minimum of five years in an international organization demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the international context of technical co-operation and telecommunication project implementation.

3. High capability to comprehend and articulate the particular needs of telecommunication development vis-à-vis the totality of socio-economic development, within the regional context.

4. Ability to initiate and maintain working relations with officials at the highest level.

5. Excellent knowledge of Spanish and good knowledge of English.

    (Under the provisions of Resolution No. 626 of the Administrative Council, a relaxation of the language requirements may be authorized in the case of candidates from developing countries.)

Annex IV

**JOB DESCRIPTION
OF
IUT (TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION) AREA REPRESENTATIVE**

1.   Duties

Under the direction of the Chief, Technical Co-operation Department, the ITU (Technical Co-operation) Area Representative will be responsible for the following technical co-operation and technical assistance activities in broad terms, in the countries of the area assigned to him:

(a)   provision of sectoral support to the Telecommunication Administrations, Governments and the UNDP Resident Co-ordinators/Representatives;

(b)   supervision, implementation and monitoring of the projects;

(c)   provision of expert assistance in his technical speciality;

He will also:

participate in the collection, circulation and exchange of information on matters pertaining to technical co-operation and technical assistance, the development of telecommunications and their rational use, and the activities of ITU in these fields.

In addition, he will:

participate in meetings or seminars and undertake other duties in connection with the development of telecommunications that may be assigned to him by the ITU Headquarters.

Within the broad fields mentioned above, the Area Representative will undertake the following duties:

(a)   **Sectorial support activities**

The Area Representative will provide sectorial support, as defined by UNDP, to Administrations, Governments and UNDP Resident Coordinators/Representatives, in particular, concerning the following:

-       identification of sectoral technical co-operation requirements in the context of each government's sectoral and inter-sectoral goals and each country's specific socio-economic setting;

- formulation of sectoral and inter-sectoral technical co-operation programmes and projects for UNDP funding.

In addition, in support of telecommuniations development, he will:

(i)   in close liaison with UNDP, assist the Telecommunication Administrations in formulting requests to the national planning and co-ordination authorities for UNDP assistance to the technical co-operation programmes and projects;

(ii)   on request and where appropriate, render advice to the extent practicable to Telecommunication Administrations on the balanced development of their networks and human resources;

(iii)   assist Telecommunication Administrations by proposing to the Headquarters the use of other resources including those of the Group of Engineers to provide rapid assistance for the solution of specific problems;

(iv)   develop and maintain close relations with the various regional/sub-regional bodies, institutions and banks with a view to securing financial and other resources for the development of telecommunications in his area;

(v)   design projects and prepare project documents when requested and take follow-up measures for their approval;

(vi)   promote programmes of TCDC on sub-regional and regional basis.

(i)   in close liaison with UNDP, assist the Telecommunication Administrations in formulting requests to the national planning and co-ordination authorities for UNDP assistance to the technical co-operation programmes and projects;

(b)   **Implementation and monitoring of the projects**

The Area Representative will provide sectorial support, as defined by UNDP, to Administrations, Governments and UNDP Resident Coordinators/Representatives, in particular, concerning the following:

(i)   Prepare job descriptions for experts and terms of reference for consultants;

(ii)   assess and define equipment needs in consultation with the Telecommunication Administration within any guidelines from the Headquarters;

(iii)   assist Administrations in the selection of nominees for fellowships and recommend, where appropriate, on the possibilities of the implementation of these fellowship programmes, including within the region.

He shall also:

(i)   whenever possible, participate in the technical briefing and debriefing of experts;

(ii)   monitor project progress through periodical visits to the project, progress and other reports, participation in the tripartite review meetings and evaluation missions and take necessary follow-up action to speed up progress;

(iii)   prepare periodical reports to the ITIJ Headquarters on the forecast of project inputs and expenditure.

(c)   **Direct Expert Assistance**

Provide expert assistance in his own particular telecommunication speciality, subject to any necessary guidance from the Headquarters.

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