

## **1st Swiss national meeting on WRC-23 preparation**

Bienne, Switzerland

### **Opening Remarks**

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Mr. Alexandre Kholod, Head of International Frequency Planning at OFCOM

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Thank you very much for inviting me to make a few remarks at the opening of the first Swiss national meeting on WRC-23 preparation. It is a great honour to join so many distinguished colleagues here in Bienne.

Dear Friends,

As countries were slowly recovering from COVID-19 pandemic and considering how to reconcile economic growth with environmental issues, we are now having to face the impacts of international conflicts and rising geopolitical tensions.

At this critical point in history, Switzerland stands as a beacon of peace.

Throughout the years, its well-known foreign policy of neutrality has ensured external security and promoted peace.

Which is probably one of the reasons for having become the host of the first international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, and of course, the International Telecommunications Union - which at the time was the International Telegraphic Union headquartered in Bern.

Later, in 1945, Switzerland also became the home to the United Nations and to numerous other international organizations, permanent missions, and non-governmental organizations.

Making the country a center of international cooperation from where significant expertise and innovations were created, as well as important initiatives to tackle the world's global challenges.

One of these global challenges that is at the heart of the work of the ITU refers to digital connectivity.

The ITU has been at the center of technological advancements in the area of communications since its inception.

As a multilateral and multistakeholder organization, it provides the platform where international discussions take place.

Through its World Radiocommunication Conferences and Study Groups, the ITU-R develops regulations and standards on both satellite and terrestrial services that support the global effort towards affordable connectivity.

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, the next WRC will take place at the World Trade Centre in Dubai, between 20 November and 15 December of 2023. It will be preceded by the Radiocommunication Assembly that will take place at the same venue.

The chairman of the conference, as is customary, will be nominated by our host country, the United Arab Emirates.

The informal group has been meeting regularly to discuss the vice-chairs of the conference, the chairs and vice-chairs of the committees as well as the chairs of the working groups, in addition to the structure of the conference itself, with the allocation of the agenda items to the various committees and working groups.

Meanwhile, extensive studies and technical discussions among governments, private companies, and academia are taking place.

To give you a dimension of the work that will be carried out from the beginning of this study cycle in 2020, and until 2023, Study Groups 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and their Working Parties and Task Group, which are in one way or another dealing with topics on the WRC-23 agenda, will hold in total 166 meetings.

Besides the Inter-regional Workshops on WRC-23 Preparation.

The total number of input contributions that were submitted and are only related to topics on the WRC-23 agenda is not easy to assess. But, if we assume that only half of the total documents submitted are in that category, the ITU-R has received and processed so far over 3600 contributions.

The summary of these studies, methods to satisfy the agenda items, and regulatory considerations for each agenda item will be compiled into the draft CPM Report to WRC-23 that might sum up to 700 pages.

In addition to the work conducted in the international arena, the preparatory process for WRCs also takes place in national and regional levels.

National Administrations are expected to use this comprehensive document when developing their positions and proposals while regional organizations focus all efforts in converging the views of Administrations and finding a common ground.

As a Member State of the ITU, Switzerland actively participates in our Conferences and meetings, and I would like to take this opportunity to salute OFCOM for the 1st Swiss national meeting on WRC-23 preparation.

During this cycle, in addition to its national preparation, Switzerland is playing an important role also in the regional preparations by chairing the CEPT Conference Preparatory Group.

This reflects Switzerland's diplomatic tradition and, of course, the able leadership of our friend Alexandre Kholod.

Dear Friends,

As I mentioned previously, Switzerland is our host country. It is also one of our top financial contributors and one of the founding members of the ITU.

Since then, Switzerland has remained an example for what can be achieved when we choose to actively work together, collaboratively, for the benefit of all.

I wish you a most successful meeting.

Thank you very much.