

ICT LAC Summit

Salvador, Brazil

Pre-recorded video message

Keynote speech

3-5 December 2024

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Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking Agostinho for the invitation to address the ICT LAC Summit.

Since the 1963 Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference, also known as the Space Conference, the ITU has been allocating frequency bands to space services and supporting the coordination of their use with other systems. Today, there are several thousands of satellites operating and many others are under development to be deployed in the near future.

What is impressive, is to observe that the rigorous and technically detailed international regulatory process for space services actually works! Indeed, 99.94 % of the total spectrum being used by satellite systems was free from harmful interference in 2023. This achievement is only possible thanks to the application of formal procedures for the coordination, notification and recording of frequency assignments for space systems, as prescribed in the Radio Regulations and implemented with the collaborative effort of our Members.

In the last decade, the ITU Radiocommunications Bureau has received an ever-increasing number of filings for non-GSO satellite systems, including systems composed of hundreds or thousands of space stations and multiple configurations submitted for coordination and notification, and a continued and expanded launch and operation of non-geostationary satellites in outer space.

To give you an idea, in 2016 we processed 56 requests of radio frequencies for non-GSO satellite systems. In 2017, this number jumped to 159, and then grew to 377 in 2022. But in 2023, it further grew to 569!

While the massive deployment of satellites will certainly bring a promising future in terms of providing broadband connectivity from space, as well as enhanced monitoring of our planet, it also transforms the current dynamics of space services into a more complex scenario that we need to take care of responsibly and responsively.

Dear Delegates,

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in 2022 adopted two Resolutions; one on the sustainability of the radio-frequency spectrum and associated satellite-orbit resources used by space services; and another on ITU's role in the implementation of the "Space2030" Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development.

Moreover, the recent ITU Radiocommunications Assembly held in 2023 adopted by consensus Resolution ITU-R 74 on Activities related to the sustainable use of radio-frequency spectrum and associated satellite-orbit resources used by space services.

Through these Resolutions, our Member States decided that the ITU, and more specifically the Radiocommunication Sector, will undertake several actions:

- Firstly, to carry out technical studies on the issue of the increasing use of radio-frequency spectrum and associated orbit resources in non-GSO orbits and the long-term sustainability of these resources, with a focus on the prevention of harmful interference. The results of these studies will be submitted to the next World Radiocommunication Conference, scheduled in 2027, for consideration and necessary action.
- Also, to develop a Handbook on best practices for the sustainable use of frequencies and associated non-GSO orbits by space radiocommunication services. This handbook will contain individual experiences and guidelines adopted by Member States and Sector Members. ITU-R Study Groups have already started to develop the Handbook.
- The third action is the development of a new Recommendation providing guidance on safe and efficient deorbit and/or disposal strategies and methodologies for non-GSO space stations involved in radiocommunication services after the end of their life.

In connection with the third of these actions, the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau has issued a Circular Letter inviting Administrations and all space stakeholders to submit their strategies for post-mission deorbiting or disposal of space stations using frequency assignments currently recorded in the ITU MIFR, under coordination or notification processes.

Moreover, the ITU created a Space Sustainability Gateway that consolidates all the information received on the topic. I take this opportunity to invite you to visit this very useful website that will promote and share data on responsible behaviours in the operations of non-GSO satellite systems.

We believe that these three actions will be extremely valuable to all space actors, both experienced and newcomers to ensure the long-term sustainability of using the radio-frequency spectrum and associated orbital resources.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The next World Radiocommunication Conference of 2027 (or WRC-27, as we call it) will consider technical and regulatory measures for equitable access to portions of the 30-50 GHz frequency bands by Fixed Satellite Service networks and systems. This new agenda item was developed considering the equal rights of all countries to use radio frequencies and satellite orbits for the various space radiocommunication services in accordance with the Radio Regulations.

Dear Colleagues,

The importance of the sustainable use of radio-frequency spectrum and associated satellite-orbit resources used by space services reaches beyond national boundaries, making it essential to address space-related issues in the international context.

The ITU is committed to providing a neutral platform where representatives from all regions and sectors can collaborate and find long-term solutions and lasting outcomes.

I wish you a fruitful Summit.

Thank you very much!