

## **WRC-23**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

### **Closing Remarks**

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Your Excellency Majed Al Mesmar, Director General of TDRA,  
Your Excellency Mohammed Al Ramsi, Chairman of WRC-23,  
Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General of the ITU,  
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, dear friends,

It is my pleasure to address you at the conclusion of this World Radiocommunication Conference 2023.

This conference had around 3900 delegates from 163 Member States and 141 Sector Members, establishing an “all-time high”.

In addition, almost 4500 users accessed the webcast sessions made available online, expanding the reach of this Conference to all ITU-R Members who could not be with us.

I am sure that those present in Dubai feel very fortunate to have experienced the hospitality and solidarity of the United Arab Emirates.

Now, as WRC-23 comes to an end we can reflect on what a great journey this was! It was a path of challenges, of resilience, and achievements!

Looking back, we can see that the agenda of WRC-23 was not an easy one. Moreover, our journey from Sharm el-Sheikh to Dubai was fraught with obstacles and challenges that no one could have foreseen, with the COVID-19 pandemic starting roughly one month after the close of the WRC-19. We had to endure more than two years of remote meetings to try to advance our work.

The CPM text with its many views and options, reflected these challenges. And yet, you have not let our common difficulties divide us. You have explored alternatives and have not feared to work and negotiate - even on the weekends and late hours.

Were the results perfect? Maybe not, as there was a need to compromise.

Was the process perfect? Surely not, and we should work on improving it.

But at the beginning of this WRC, the success of the Conference was laid in your capable hands, and you placed energy and devotion in the discussions that took place during the last four weeks.

Your efforts now allow us to rejoice in the accomplishments of this memorable conference that found solutions for all agenda items, some of which had already been discussed in previous conferences, such as: Agenda items 1.1, 1.3 and 1.8, as well as Document 550.

A lot was achieved during the past 4 weeks!

Let me highlight a few of WRC-23 outcomes:

- On broadband connectivity, WRC-23 allocated additional frequency bands to the mobile service on a primary basis and identified several mid-range bands for IMT which will contribute not only to IMT-2020 (5G) but also to the development of future IMT-2030 (6G). In the 6 GHz band parts of the band can be used for IMT or the implementation of wireless access systems (WAS) including radio local area networks (RLANs).

- WRC-23 identified frequency bands for use by high-altitude platform stations as IMT base stations (HIBS) and established regulations for their operations. This identification offers new means of providing mobile broadband connectivity to underserved communities in rural and remote areas, with minimal infrastructure and using the same frequencies and devices as IMT networks.
- Broadband communication was also extended to the sea and the air, and regulatory provisions and interference management mechanisms were put in place to allow earth stations in motion on aircraft and vessels to communicate with both GSO and non-GSO space stations.
- The future of terrestrial broadcasting was also considered by this WRC as it reviewed the spectrum use and spectrum needs of existing services in the UHF frequency band. This turned out to be the most difficult discussion of this conference. But WRC-23 found the balance that allowed for the use of IMT in different parts of the 600 MHz band while fully protecting the broadcasting service.
- On the aeronautical services front, the Conference allocated VHF spectrum to the aeronautical mobile-satellite (route) service and determined conditions to protect the existing usage. This decision enables to relay the ground-to-pilots communications via NGSO satellite systems and allows aircraft to be in touch with air traffic controllers everywhere, especially in oceanic and remote areas.
- Regarding scientific agenda items, WRC-23 worked on two fronts, the collection and the transmission of scientific data. The establishment of additional allocations to the Earth exploration-satellite services will provide unique information on the physical properties of the Earth and the atmosphere and broadband communication downlinks will enable the transmission of future scientific data at high transmission speeds.

- As for space services, WRC-23 adopted regulatory actions for the provision of inter-satellite links. This will allow data to be made available in near-real time, enhancing the availability and value of instrument data for low-latency applications such as weather forecasting and disaster risk reduction.
- WRC-23 also approved a new resolution on tolerances for certain orbital characteristics of space stations deployed as part of non-geostationary-satellite orbit systems in the fixed-satellite, broadcasting-satellite, or mobile-satellite service; and improved procedures to obtain and protect national planned resources.
- As I already mentioned during this Conference, I am especially proud of the final steps for the successful implementation of Resolution 559. After years of extensive work, WRC-23 confirmed that 41 administrations now have a much better opportunity to provide satellite broadcast services to the population.

I very much appreciate all your efforts to solve these difficult issues and achieve compromises, and I congratulate you on your achievements!

I am also very grateful for the solutions proposed by WRC-23 to address the difficulties or inconsistencies raised by the BR under Agenda Item 9.2 in the application of the Radio Regulations.

WRC-23 has paved the way for the technological advancements of terrestrial and space services that will make a real impact on the social, economic, and environmental development of all nations for generations to come.

Dear colleagues,

As you know, the world we live in is changing rapidly. The technological advancements, as well as the needs of Administrations, will continue to evolve. Thus, the periodic review of the Radio Regulations will ensure the international framework towards managing radiofrequency spectrum and associated orbital resources is up to date with this everchanging world.

The various items on the WRC-27 agenda and WRC-31 preliminary agenda reflect this situation.

Remarkably, the interest in developing further topics discussed at this conference such as IMT, ESIMs, and Earth Exploration Satellite Services, remains, and we will see them again in the next conferences!

The prominence and interest in securing frequencies for space and science services is also evident given the number of related agenda items on the forthcoming conferences.

New agenda items have been approved for the protection of radio astronomy, as well as for equitable access to the Q/V frequency bands.

Frequency bands will also be studied towards potential new allocations for the use of space weather sensors, which would facilitate the prediction of space weather events and their impacts on services critical to the economy, safety, and security of the population.

Finally, new mobile-satellite services will be studied for the development of satellite-based Internet of Things and to complement terrestrial IMT network coverage with direct connectivity from space to IMT user equipment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Each one of you has played a vital role in the success of this WRC and I have much to be thankful for.

- Let me start by thanking you, Mr. Chairman, for taking on this huge responsibility with tranquility and good humor. If the plenaries seemed smooth, it was because the discussions in your office were tough! Thank

you for your commitment and for guiding the proceedings of this conference in such an efficient and pleasant manner.

- I thank the WRC Vice-Chairs, and chairs of the committees, working groups, sub-working groups, drafting groups, and ad hoc groups for working until the very end to bring the best outcomes to the plenary.
- I thank the Chairman of the Informal Group, the Heads of the Regional groups, and the Heads of Delegations for your dedication and long hours of negotiations.
- I thank the ITU staff in general and the BR colleagues in particular for going the extra mile to support and assist all delegates in whatever way possible.
- I thank our host country for their hospitality which was beyond compare. You provided us with the best conference venue and facilities ever. Your organization, patience, understanding, and generosity were simply fantastic.
- Last, but not least, I thank all of you, distinguished delegates, for investing yourselves and bringing the 2023 World Radiocommunication Conference to a successful conclusion.

Dear Friends,

This is my last WRC as BR Director. It has been an honor and a big pleasure to serve you and the entire ITU-R community during these past years.

For those returning home, I wish you all a safe trip back and a peaceful and joyful holiday season.

Thank you very much.