

The Global ICT Standardization Forum for India (GISFI): Standardization Strategy
session

Keynote Speech

Malcolm Johnson, Director, ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau
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It is my great honour and pleasure to speak to you today.

Let me first of all thank Professor Navale, President of Sinhgad Technical Education Society (STES) and Professor Inamdar, Director of STES Campus in Lonavala for such generous and friendly hospitality.

I would also like to thank Professor Prasad for his kind invitation to speak here and congratulate him and his collaborators in forming The Global ICT Standardization Forum for India, a very timely and significant initiative. I wish GISFI every success and I look forward to it developing a close collaboration with the ITU. The Indian Government is a major contributor to ITU, and I very much hope that GISFI and the Indian private sector will become equally active in the future.

I would like to begin by showing you a short video to introduce to you the standards work of ITU. As you may know, ITU is the lead UN agency for information and communication technologies.

The idea of the film is to show not only the end-to-end scope of the ITU's standardization work, but also just how important ICTs are to life today.

Without ITU standards you could not make a telephone call from one part of the world to another, you would not be able to surf the web.

ITU's work has moved on from pure telecoms to multimedia – IPTV, video codecs, videoconferencing, broadband cable, fibre optics, home networking, and of course cybersecurity.

So let us run the movie which was actually filmed using an ITU standard – H.264.

RUNS VIDEO

I hope you enjoyed our film which was produced by NHK with the kind sponsorship of NTT and Cisco. It really shows how dependent we are now on ICTs not only for business but for our social development.

In ITU we are now concentrating more on the applications of ICTs. For example ITU participated in the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen last December to bring

home to the delegates the significant role that ICTs can play in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Climate change has been a major focus of ITU over the last few years. It has been high on our agenda since the publication of our Technology Watch Report on ICTs and climate change in 2007. The report was very well received and led to two symposia in Kyoto and London in 2008 where the need for a common methodology for estimating the impact of ICTs on climate change became apparent.

As a result an ITU Focus Group on ICTs and Climate Change was set up. ITU Focus Groups are created to generate a momentum on a particular standards initiative. They can adopt their own working methods and are open to participation by any interested party, not only ITU members. The Focus Group benefited from contributions from 20 different organizations and after 28 meetings (all but three virtual meetings) concluded successfully with four deliverables including an outline methodology in March 2009.

Our "Environment and Climate Change" Study Group (ITU-T SG5) is now progressing this work on methodologies in several domains: the life cycle environmental impact of ICTs goods and services, and ICT projects; and the environmental impact of ICTs in organizations, and in countries. We aim to finalize the first two methodologies by the end of this year while the other two will be finalized by the end of 2011.

Another notable achievement of Study Group 5 in 2009 was Recommendation L.1000 on an energy efficient universal charger for mobile phones. This Universal Charging Solution offers predicted potential savings of at least 13.6 million tons of CO₂ a year, and up to 82,000 tons of dumped chargers a year.

In the last few weeks we have accelerated work in the field of Smart Grids. The US Department of Energy estimates that full deployment of Smart Grids could reduce 18% of GHG emissions in the US electricity sector by 2030. Our members have identified the need for global standards in this area and so we are creating another Focus Group that will allow participation of all players including, importantly the energy sector.

Together with ISO and IEC we are working on efficient ICT solutions to reduce emission in the automotive sector, and we have another Fully Networked Car event at the Geneva Motor Show next week.

We have seven other technical Study Groups covering broadband cable, IPTV, future networks, quality of service, protocols, optical transport networks, multimedia and security. In addition we have two study groups covering operational aspects, numbering, and economic and policy issues. We have also started work towards the revision of the International Telecommunications Regulations which is an international treaty laying down the regulatory framework for the international communications.

ITU is a membership led organization with a unique public/private partnership of 191 governments and around 700 private sector representatives.

We rely heavily on our private sector members for the development of our global standards which we call Recommendations.

ITU has open, transparent, consensus based, and fast working standards development processes; probably the fastest.

Once consensus has been reached, draft standards are placed on our website and if no comments are received after four weeks they are approved, in effect by 191 countries.

ITU standards are therefore truly global, open standards, unlike those of many other standards bodies, forums or consortia that claim to produce global and open standards.

The global proliferation of fora and consortia is a major concern for the world's ICT industry. The standards world today is characterized by a bewildering array of organizations, with different agendas, different participants, and with very divergent working methods. The need for coordination and collaboration on standards work at an international level is more obvious today than it has ever been.

Last year ITU hosted a meeting of top CTOs from around the world, and this was one of their major concerns.

Collaboration and cooperation has always been a key objective of ITU.

As well as over 40 formal relationships with other standards bodies, we were pleased to host last year the Global Standards Collaboration (GSC). This meets every year to promote innovation and collaboration on a broad spectrum of ICT standards topics. Some hundred participants from the Participating Standards Organizations (PSO) attend. It provides a venue to freely exchange information on the progress of standards development in the different countries and regions and to collaborate in planning future standards development to gain synergy and to reduce duplication.

The mandate of GSC is to provide a venue for the leaders of Participating Standards Organizations to support the ITU as the preeminent global telecommunication and radiocommunication standards development organization.

I very much hope to see GISFI becoming a member in the near future.

One area we need to pay more attention to is conformity assessment and the interoperability of equipment and services provided by different vendors and operators. This has been identified in ITU as of critical concern especially to many developing countries and is something that India has in particular brought to our attention. We are therefore implementing four action lines: the development of a conformity database on

our website where companies can list products complying with ITU standards; a series of interoperability events which we will look to facilitate with other standards bodies, forums or consortia; human capacity building; and assisting developing countries to establish their own test centres. I look forward to India's participation in this programme.

Ladies and gentlemen

ICTs are clearly an important driver for economic growth and development in India. Globally India's name has become synonymous with hi-tech. Your country is now the second largest mobile market in the world.

However, a sustainable Indian ICT industry sector can only be truly sustainable if there is a complete ecosystem including R&D, manufacturing, and participation in the development of global standards and policies.

ITU's mission is to connect the world. One of our main activities is in human capacity building.

In 2007, ITU signed a cooperation agreement with India's Telecom Centres of Excellence that will help this development.

ITU's worldwide Centres of Excellence (CoE) Network aims at strengthening the capacity within each region in order to develop high-level know-how and expertise in telecommunication policy, regulatory issues, corporate management and advanced ICTs.

ITU also holds many workshops and tutorials worldwide. Our standardization sector alone held 30 events around the world in 2009, ranging from NGN to cyber security to climate change to accessibility.

ITU is also keen to involve academia and research institutes in our work.

In 2008 we launched a new initiative called "Kaleidoscope" that will bring closer ties between ITU, academia and research institutes. The events are technically co-sponsored by the IEEE Communications Society. We issue a call for papers which are peer reviewed and the best papers are selected for presentation over a two day period. The three best papers are awarded prizes totaling US-\$10,000 and these papers are also published by the IEEE. Some excellent work has been presented which has found its way into ITU-T's standardization work.

This year's Kaleidoscope will be held here in India at the University of Pune, with the title "Beyond the Internet? – Innovations for future networks and services". The call for papers is available on our website and we have some flyers in the room. I look forward to seeing many papers from Indian researchers at this year's event.

This is one way to encourage greater participation from India in ITU –by academia and experts from India extending their knowledge and experience around the world.

But, I would like to see more participation from India in our standards work.

Participation in the standards making process is essential to ensure requirements are met, to increase understanding, and to assist implementation of new technologies. Global standards provide a level playing field allowing local manufacturers to enter the world market.

Comparisons are often made between India and China. However I checked the statistics on participation of China in our standards work compared to India and found that although China's contribution has increased 10 times in the last 6 years, India's has shown only moderate increase.

We are facilitating participation in our work in many ways:

- Meetings in the regions
- Remote participation
- Reduced membership fees for SMEs in developing countries
- Nominal participation fee for academia
- Free ITU standards

ITU is a huge resource. We are very grateful that the Indian government doubled its financial contribution to the ITU in 2007. I hope to see India's industry take advantage of this membership. It will be to India's advantage, ITU's advantage, and ultimately it will be of benefit to the entire world.

I hope to see many of you participating in ITU in the future, I look forward to welcoming GISFI to the ITU, and I look forward to coming back here in December for what I am sure will be a very successful Kaleidoscope conference.

Over the next few days I look forward to hearing your thoughts and wish you a great success for this meeting.