



ITU: Three Sectors at Cross Roads

Research Topical Session: Contributor Erik Bohlin

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Note: Collaboration with Simon Forge gratefully acknowledged

The strategic purpose of the ITU

- Reshaping the ITU based on its strategic purpose means understanding what is demanded of it today and what will be required of it over the next decades

TODAY

The main problem for the ITU is that telecommunications has moved on but the ITU is still reminiscent of the 1980's in many aspects because:-

- a) Telecoms has become much wider in scope than pure fixed and radio communications as it converges with computing,
- So OTT dominates at an application level, not the physical level - thus *the application is the network (and not just the computer !)*

b) What is deemed to be 'Telecoms' has become much more important:-

- The field is now far more essential to the global economy than even 10 years ago - so the political pressures are perhaps many times greater than 10 (or 40) years ago.
- Hence there is now far more need for rapid and **effective Global level** regulation as much as *Regional level* regulation as the web platform players are increasingly global and increasingly dominant in all markets

A ROADMAP FOR THE NEXT 3 DECADES:-

1 Identify the policy areas where ITU must act in the future –

which include economic and regulatory areas as much as technical as the socio-economic dependencies on communications are so much higher

2 Identify the options for key structures

- The decision taking process - and its structure - that gives a balance for all countries to participate (including the WRC series - and set up similar processes for other areas - technical, economic and regulatory)
- A completely revised ITU administrative structure based on neutral governance principles as far as national and regional bias may impact - with an independent investigative review committee for major decisions, having powers to rapidly audit the administration's behaviour and quality of work at any time, plus a 6-monthly regular review
- A funding mechanism that enables freedom of decision internationally