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ALL EYES ON ANTALYA

The top event in the world of telecommunications this month is the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), opening in Antalya, Turkey on November 6 and scheduled to conclude on the 24th. As the name implies, the "Plenipot" is the ultimate authority in the ITU. Every four years, representatives of the Member States of the ITU meet to consider proposed changes to the organization's Constitution and Convention, adopt strategic and financial plans, and elect the senior management of the organization. Approximately 2,000 attendees are expected.

Incumbent Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi is not eligible to run for another term. A new Secretary-General will be elected from a field of six candidates including the current Deputy Secretary-General, Roberto Blois of Brazil, and the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, Hamadoun Touré of Mali. They are also term-limited in their present positions and so must move "up or out." The other candidates are Marc Furrer of Switzerland, Matthias Kurth of Germany, Montasser Ouaili of Tunisia, and Muna Nijem of Jordan. The Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau, Valery Timofeev of the Russian Federation, is eligible for re-election and is unopposed. There are four candidates for each of the other three senior posts: Deputy Secretary-General, Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, and Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau.

Among the candidates for the 12 seats on the part-time Radio Regulations Board is Robert W. Jones, VE7RWJ. Bob served two terms as Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau and subsequently served as a consultant to the IARU at the 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference.

In addition to the election of these individuals, 46 Member States will be elected to the ITU Council. The Council meets annually and supervises the overall management and administration of the ITU between Plenipots.

The delegates in Antalya, and those whom they elect to carry out the work of the ITU over the next four years, face great challenges. In recent years the Member States have been unwilling to increase their financial contributions to the ITU. Coupled with normal increases in expenses and with the costs associated with simultaneous interpretation and the translation of documents into the six official languages of the ITU, this has limited the ability of the ITU to keep up with the rapid pace of developments in telecommunications and has led to staff reductions and depressed morale among those who remain. The outgoing Secretary-General has complained of having responsibility without authority as a result of the Bureau Directors being elected by the Member States rather than appointed by the Secretary-General.

The delegates will even be called upon to consider changing the name of the ITU! A Common Proposal submitted by several Arab States would make it the "International Telecommunication and Information Technology Union." Whatever the fate of this specific proposal in Antalya, it does reflect a growing belief among the Member States that "telecommunication" no longer adequately encompasses the scope of the ITU's responsibilities.

Among the observers at the Plenipot will be IARU Vice President Tim Ellam, VE6SH and International Coordinator for Emergency Communications Hans Zimmermann, HB9AQS/F5VKP, each of whom will be present for half of the Conference. The IARU member-society for Turkey, Telsiz ve Radyo Amatörleri Cemiyeti (TRAC), has organized a demonstration station and exhibit of Amateur Radio emergency communications capabilities adjacent to the conference site.

ITU-R STUDY GROUP 1 WORKING PARTIES MEET IN MUNICH

Volunteer IARU Technical Representative Ken Pulfer, VE3PU represented the IARU at meetings of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector's Working Parties (WP) 1A and 1B in Munich, Germany October 9-13. (WP 1C also met, but its agenda did not require IARU participation.)

WP 1A dealt with two topics of direct interest to the Amateur Service: Interference from Power Line Telecommunication Systems (variously known as BPL, PLC or PLT) and a study of possible allocations above 275 GHz. Topics considered by WP 1B included Software Defined Radio and Cognitive Radio.

All of these topics may be described as "works in progress" within Study Group 1. With regard to BPL, Ken reports: "The updated Working Document towards a Preliminary Draft New Recommendation is a definite improvement over what was produced last year, but still requires more work. It attempts to provide guidance to administrations dealing with domestic BPL installations that may cause interference to radiocommunications services, and at the same time notes the Report (below) that gives examples of such interference. The current (still very rough) version of the Draft Report is a compendium of input documents, or extracts from input documents, including examples of interference measurements provided by Brazil, the North American Broadcasters Association, and CBS."

Work on the Draft Report will continue in a Correspondence Group, which has been asked to produce an updated version of the report for the next meeting of WP 1A next June. The IARU will be participating actively in the Correspondence Group in order to ensure that the document includes the protection requirements for the Amateur Service.

IARU REPRESENTED AT ANNUAL CISPR MEETING

As usual, the IARU was represented by IARU EMC Adviser Christian M. Verholt, OZ8CY, at the annual meeting of CISPR: The International Special Committee on Radio Interference. This year's meeting was held in Stockholm, Sweden September 11-20. CISPR develops electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) standards and as one might expect, voices representing industry are heard more frequently than are voices representing radio spectrum users. IARU participation is important to ensure that CISPR standards are adequate to protect the interests of the Amateur and Amateur-Satellite Services.

IARU concerns at CISPR include:

- Interference from broadband emitters, including but not limited to BPL/PLC/PLT
- Interference from electronic lighting equipment
- Immunity standards for multimedia and information technology equipment (ITE)
- Interference from larger LCD and Plasma video screens

Christian notes a lack of appreciation for the unique nature of the radio spectrum below 30 MHz among CISPR participants. Radio amateurs - indeed, everyone who relies on the wonderful phenomenon of ionospheric propagation for long-distance communication - face a never-ending challenge to educate others regarding the need to protect this irreplaceable natural resource.

Until next month,
73,
David Sumner, K1ZZ
Secretary, IARU

The IARU E-Letter is published on behalf on the Administrative Council of the International Amateur Radio Union by the IARU International Secretariat. Editor: David Sumner, K1ZZ, IARU Secretary.

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