



Resolution 937 (1990)¹

Telecommunications: the implications for Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Convinced that the telecommunications sector is ideal ground for establishing a link between nations, and that such co-operation can operate in the matter of standards and the creation of telecommunications infrastructures ;
2. Welcoming the efforts made by the European Community with a view to harmonising telecommunications networks and opening up the services market in its twelve member states, and convinced that this harmonisation should also benefit not only other Council of Europe member states but the whole of the European continent ;
3. Considering that European telecommunications standards are, in large measure, prepared by the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) which brings together the member countries of the Council of Europe as well as Yugoslavia, the Vatican City and the Principality of Monaco ;
4. Welcoming co-operation with some East European countries, which was eased by the relaxation in 1988 of the Cocom rules on telecommunications equipment ;
5. Considering that some developing countries, and in particular those in Africa, are still at a severe disadvantage because of their weak telecommunications structures ;
6. Considering that the technical infrastructure most suited to the development of the African continent is an integrated telecommunications system which includes a satellite component, and whose feasibility study is being undertaken under the auspices of an inter-agency co-ordinating committee (IACC) in which the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the lead agency, associating the African countries and ten international and intergovernmental regional organisations ;
7. Anxious that the telecommunications equipment sector should remain one of Europe's economic strengths ;
8. Convinced that the success of this sector largely depends on standardisation, research and the opening up of public contracts ;
9. Convinced that the growth of a new, important economic sector dealing with "value-added services" depends on present developments in telecommunications, and that the emergence of "new businesses" in such a sector can play an effective part in the creation of new jobs ;
10. Convinced that "high-definition television" will be of vital importance to industry over the next decade ;
11. Considering that the availability of, and equal access to, basic telecommunications services already contribute substantially to the well-being of populations, conditioning their economic development, and that the improvement of telecommunications in the developing countries will have a positive impact on the whole of the world economy ;

1. Assembly debate on 31 January 1990 (26th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6151](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology, Rapporteur : Mr Fourré). Text adopted by the Assembly on 31 January 1990 (26th Sitting).



12. Aware that regional disparities in telecommunications infrastructures accentuate regional imbalances ;
13. Welcoming the European Community's initiatives in connection with telecommunications development on a regional level, as given practical effect in the "Special Telecommunication Action for Regional Development" (STAR) programme ;
14. Welcoming the pragmatic and flexible system of financing the EUREKA programme ;
15. Convinced that telecommunications are an outstanding medium for the development of education and vocational training, both in developing countries and those with scattered populations and in industrial countries ;
16. Convinced that communications technology allows a restructuring of the employment sector (teleworking, teleshopping) and presents opportunities for harmonising social conditions ;
17. Considering that telecommunications, audiovisual techniques and integrated broadband communications contribute to the spread of information and culture ;
18. Aware of the interaction between technical media and cultural creation, influenced, inter alia, by the development of cable television, direct broadcasting by satellite and the emergence of high-definition television ;
19. Convinced that direct broadcasting by satellite can be a source of information independent of the institutional sources ;
20. Convinced that monopolies over complete communications channels, particularly where the medium is identified with the message, carry potential risks of cultural domination and, therefore, that pluralism and freedom of information are the best guarantees of democracy,
21. Invites the governments of member states :
 - a. to ensure that the development of new communications media contributes to improving the individual's freedom of information and to strengthening democracy ;
 - b. to ensure pluralist use of the networks and to make sure the medium is separated from the message in the provision of communications media ;
 - c. to encourage the creation of independent programmes on telecommunications networks and cable networks by preventing programming monopolies ;
 - d. to support schemes to develop educational and vocational training programmes using the full range of techniques and media : telematics, television, cable, radio and satellite ;
 - e. to support the setting up of a high-power data transmission network linking together scientific research centres in Europe ;
 - f. to assist in developing employment by encouraging the ripple effect in the telecommunications sector and, in particular, by promoting the creation of small and medium-sized businesses offering "value-added services" ;
 - g. to extend harmonisation rules on the provision of open networks and the opening up of the market for value-added telecommunications services within member states ;
 - h. to encourage telecommunications and broadcasting system standardisation on a global basis so as to facilitate the rapid introduction and development of new techniques, thereby providing manufacturers, operators and consumers with worldwide opportunities and corresponding economies of scale ;
 - i. to strengthen the European telecommunications equipment industry by giving priority to the development of integrated services digital networks (ISDN), and through standardisation, research and the opening up of public contracts within member countries ;
 - j. to take steps to introduce common standards for direct broadcasting by satellite ;
 - k. to promote the expansion of the pan-European mobile telecommunications network groupe système mobile (GSM) ;
 - l. to support the adoption of a common standard for high-definition television in Europe ;
 - m. to promote the creation of an internal market for high-definition television covering all the media : cable, hertzian wave and satellite ;

- n.* to take steps to correct regional disparities within member states, so that the essential telecommunications services are equally accessible to all and that the basis for an economic upturn is secured ;
- o.* to study the implementation of a regional levelling-up programme along the lines of the European Community's STAR programme and financed in the same way as the EUREKA programme ;
- p.* to initiate consultation with a view to extending the rules governing standardisation and the provision of networks to East European countries ;
- q.* to respond favourably to the applications of East European countries wishing to join the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) ;
- r.* to back international telecommunications programmes designed to assist the developing countries and, in particular, the promotion of a regional telecommunications satellite for Africa, involving the maximum number of states in the region and bringing all existing initiatives together.