



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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DA 01-455
February 20, 2001

Petition for Enforcement of International Settlements Benchmarks Rates

IB Docket No. 96-261

AT&T Corporation (“AT&T”) and its affiliates Concert Global Networks USA L.L.C. and Concert Global Network Services Ltd. (“Concert”); and WorldCom, Inc. have filed a joint petition requesting that the Commission enforce its benchmark settlement rate of 15¢ per minute as required by the Commission’s *Benchmarks Order*¹ for service on the U.S.-Qatar route.

As the Commission has stated on numerous occasions, above-cost accounting rates harm U.S. consumers and may result in market distortions. The Commission adopted the *Benchmarks Order* to ensure that U.S. consumers pay reasonable rates for international communications service and to reduce the distortions that may result from above-cost accounting rates. The *Order* establishes a set of benchmark settlement rates and requires U.S. international facilities-based carriers to negotiate settlement rates that comply with the benchmark rates according to a transition schedule. The benchmark settlement rates and the transition schedule for the rates depend primarily upon countries’ income per capita levels. For carriers in countries classified as upper income countries, which includes Qatar, the *Order* requires that a settlement rate that does not exceed 15¢ per minute will be used to conduct revenue settlements on service provided with the United States beginning on January 1, 1999.

In their joint petition, AT&T and WorldCom state that they have attempted to negotiate settlement rates that comply with the *Benchmarks Order* with the carrier that provides international service in Qatar, Qatar Telecom (“Q-tel”). Despite their best efforts, they have been unsuccessful in reaching agreements with Q-tel that comply with the Commission’s benchmark settlement rate of 15¢ per minute. Therefore, AT&T and WorldCom request that the Commission enforce its *Benchmarks Order* by requiring no U.S. carrier pay a settlement rate that exceeds 15¢ for service with Qatar beginning on January 1, 1999.

Interested parties are requested to file comments no later than March 22, 2001, and reply comments no later than April 6, 2001. Any filings should reference the file number of this proceeding. An original and four copies of all pleadings must be filed in accordance with Section 1.51(c) of the Commission’s rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.51(c). The pleadings should be filed with Magalie Roman Salas, Secretary, FCC, 445 12th Street, S.W., TW-A235, Washington, D.C. 20554. In addition, one copy of each pleading must be filed with: (1) International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037; (2) the FCC Office of Public Affairs Reference and Information Center, located in room CY-A257 at the Portals 2 building, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20554; and (3) each

¹ *Report and Order on Regulation of International Settlement Rates*, 12 FCC Rcd 19806 (1997) *aff’d. sub nom., Cable and Wireless v. FCC*, No. 97-612 (D.C. Cir., January 12, 1999).

of the petitioners.

Copies of the petition and any subsequently filed documents in this matter may be obtained from International Transcription Services, Inc. (ITS), 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. The telephone number of ITS is (202) 857-3800. The petition and any subsequently filed documents are also available for public inspection and copying during normal business hours at the FCC Office of Public Affairs Reference and Information Center, located in room CY-A257 at the Portals 2 building, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. The center's telephone number is (202) 418-0270.

For further information, please contact Ken Stanley or Kathy O'Brien, Telecommunications Division, International Bureau, (202) 418-1470.