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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Chairs 5th Annual ITU Global Symposium for Regulators
Resulting in the Identification of Best Practice “Connectivity” Guidelines

Washington, D.C. - Telecommunications regulators participating in the 5th annual ITU Global Symposium for Regulators have identified the best practices needed to facilitate access to broadband and internet connectivity so that social and economic benefits of the information society can benefit all the world’s citizens. They expressed a shared goal to create national regulatory frameworks that are flexible and that enable competition between multiple private sector service providers who may want to utilize a variety of technology platforms and delivery options. The regulators further stressed that in order to achieve global connectivity and reap the social and economic benefits this would bring, there must be fair and reasonable access for competitive broadband services, including internet connectivity.

FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, the Chair of the GSR, stated in her concluding remarks that, “Broadband networks are the key to maximizing the promise of an evolving and converging information and communications technology sector. New wireless and converging technologies that are sure to follow can revolutionize our societies and help to close the broadband divide that exists within and among our countries.”

In Commissioner Abernathy’s role as Chair, she was able to obtain consensus from the heads of 54 national regulatory authorities from both developed and developing countries, with representatives from 106 countries, on the best ways to address the challenges of convergence and to achieve the stated goal of affordable access. The GSR, which attracted 350 participations, has the reputation as the most important global venue for regulators to share views and experiences by fostering an open dialogue amongst themselves and with key stakeholders, including the private sector, investors and consumers.

As Hamadoun I. Touré, Director of the ITU Development Bureau recognized, “Technological innovations and market developments are forcing telecommunications regulators to rethink their regulatory practices. The reality is that with a full range of ICT services and devices available on different networks – regulators must face the question of whether licenses that limit operators to specific services or technologies still makes sense.”

This year’s GSR also showcased technology demonstrations by equipment vendors and services providers to showcase new, low cost broadband and internet telecommunications equipment. Exhibitors included Cisco Systems, Ericsson, Intel Corp., Intrado, Massachusetts

Institute of Technology, Midas Communication Technologies Pvt. Nortel Networks Corp., Qualcomm Inc., TE Data, Texas Instruments and Vivato.

The regulators closed their meeting by endorsing the “Best Practices Guidelines for the Promotion of Low Cost Broadband and Internet Connectivity,” which outlines a common understanding of what is necessary to create an information society that is more effective and equitable. The regulators agreed to forward this document to the 2005 meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society. A copy of the Best Practices can be viewed at:

<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/treg/Events/Seminars/2004/GSR04/consultation.html>.

The GSR also welcomed the release of the 2004 edition of the annual ITU publication, “Trends in Telecommunication Reform. A copy of this publication can be viewed at:

<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/treg/>

For further information on the GSR, visit the Symposium webpage at the following:
<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/treg/Events/Seminars/2004/GSR04/index.html>.