

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: *International Settlements Policy Reform; Joint Petition for Rulemaking of AT&T Inc., Sprint Nextel Corporation and Verizon; Modifying the Commission's Process to Avert Harm to U.S. Competition and U.S. Customers Caused by Anticompetitive Conduct; Petition of AT&T for Settlements Stop Payment Order on the U.S.-Tonga Route, IB Docket No. 11-[XX]*

I am pleased that the two items before us today recognize and act upon the substantial changes that have occurred in international communications over the last 20 years and which continue even as we meet today. It is important that FCC policies always evolve to stay on top of this rapidly changing global communications world. I believe that Commission policies over the past two decades have been an undeniable success—providing certainty and protection for American companies and lower rates for American consumers. In those instances where we saw conditions that allowed foreign carriers to abuse their market relationship with U.S. carriers the Commission has generally delivered relief in ways that have been both wise and sound.

We need to remain vigilant in this space. It is only through good information, constant oversight and prompt response that we will avoid further problems in this arena. So I am pleased that we will be assessing our procedures and safeguards in a manner that will be capable of addressing anticompetitive behavior by foreign carriers in an expeditious way while also getting rid of some outdated regulations regarding international traffic. We know that in the last decade the number of U.S. billed international calls has increased 220 percent and that more than 70 billion minutes were recorded in 2009. While this increase has had a significant impact on settlement rates, we need to continue looking at the data to ensure that these savings are passed on to consumers. It's also important that we are revisiting our finding in the 2004 ISP Reform Order that blockage or disruption directly harms the public interest. Since that time the routing has grown more intricate and complex. I'm glad that we are examining these changes and teeing up questions as to what extent partial circuit blockages constitute anticompetitive behavior.

We are also moving forward to modify the data reporting requirements for international carriers to be more in sync with the reality of today's markets and to better respond to the needs of the Commission as we seek to promote competition and the benefits of international communications to American consumers.

Although technology and markets change, our fundamental regulatory responsibilities remain constant. I want to thank the Chairman and the International Bureau for their efforts on this issue and for their continuing vigilance to protect American consumers and our enterprises through workable, fair and efficient rules and policies in the global marketplace.

