



21st Annual Telecommunications Conference and Trade Exhibition

19 - 22 June 2005

St. Kitts Marriott Resort, St. Kitts & Nevis

Hosted by: Cable and Wireless, St. Kitts Ltd.

Theme:

**“Telecom Liberalization and the CSME:
Opening New Doors”**



**Progress Report on Five Priorities of
THE BONAIRE CONCORDAT**
Developed during the 1st CEOs Meeting
Held on the 25 January 2004 in Bonaire

BACKGROUND

The CEOs Meeting was planned to examine the current direction of CANTO and make recommendations on the future strategic direction of the organization as seen through the eyes of the top decision makers in CANTO member companies. At the first meeting held on the 25th January 2004 in Bonaire, The following five priorities were identified and the Secretariat was mandated to address these issues: **Relevant Information to the Caribbean; Education and Research; Finding solutions to issues of common concern to all operators such as external threats and developments at WTO, FTAA and FCC; The need for collaboration on technical issues and standards across the Caribbean; and The potential regulatory issues that would arise as a result of the convergence of technologies.**

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

The following outlines the priorities and gives an update on the progress made thus far.

1. Relevant Information to the Caribbean

- In keeping with this objective, CANTO Caribbean Telecom Analyst was launched during the last week of November 2004. This CANTO-Informa Research Service is an agreement with Informa Telecoms and Media to provide CANTO members with an electronic monthly newsletter, six thematic papers and a 25% discount on the purchase of an annual report on the mobile sector, evaluating the strategies, developments and outcomes for the Caribbean Mobile Market in 2005. To date over four hundred and twenty-five subscribers from members companies have received three editions of the newsletter and two thematic papers - one on WiFi/WiMax and one on Prepaid Strategies and Minimizing Churn. Four thematic papers titled Future Mobile Networks, Revenue Assurance and Fraud Risks, Messaging, and Mobile Data and Roaming will be issued by-monthly.

2. Education and Research

- Computers for Schools Project
The “**Computers for Schools**” Project is one aspect of the cooperation agreement between the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunication Organizations (CANTO) and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States through the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) to provide cost effective computers to schools in CANTO Member Countries. The agreement also provides for training to be given to the recipients of the computers.

The Computers for Schools Project establishes a mechanism to strengthen connectivity with a special emphasis on rural and underserved areas in the Caribbean region through the application of information technologies.

CANTO member countries through its member can strengthen connectivity and increase universal access via:

- Collaboration in the design and development of socio-educational, economic and cultural initiatives that promote access to connectivity, including but not limited to telephony and internet services, particularly for those in low-income populations and remote communities of the Caribbean.
- Expansion of educational opportunities throughout the Caribbean
- Reduced and/or free access to the Internet for schools and Ministries of education in the region
- Enabling teachers and students to finance low cost computers, to be paid for through the interested individual's telephone bill.
- Identifying and implementing various initiatives to develop educational programs and expand access through the use of information technology
- Regional partnerships to modernize the educational and communication systems of the Caribbean.

Cable and Wireless Jamaica Ltd, the first CANTO member to utilize this facility distributed more than 400 computers to schools in Jamaica. The Cable and Wireless Foundation (C&WJF) purchased 500 computers and made available 398 to the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) and 50 to Campion College. The remaining 52 computers are to be used by the C&WJF in its various projects.

The computers were purchased at a cost of US\$392.00 each. C&WJF sold the computers to the JBTE and Campion College at a cost of US \$300 each absorbing the remaining US \$92.00 per computer. C&WJF has therefore subsidized the computers presented to the two institutions in the amount of US \$41,216 or J \$3m. The computers were bought from and will be serviced by TelLenio Technologies.

Other CANTO members, TELESUR, Suriname, Belize, Telecommunications Ltd, Belize and Telem St. Maarten have indicated their interest in this development initiative. TELESUR and Belize Telecommunications Ltd have already started the process and are presently exploring funding options for the completion of the project.

3. Finding solutions to issues of common concern to all operators such as external threats and developments at WTO, FTAA and FCC

○ FCC-Mobile Termination Rates

The Regulatory Committee reviewed the FCC Notice of Inquiry on Foreign Mobile Termination Rates and filed its comments on the 14th February 2005.

The following summarizes comments subsequently filed on behalf of CANTO

”CANTO strongly advocates the FCC not to intervene in the regulation of

non-US mobile termination rates. Instead, CANTO urges the FCC to permit market place and technological forces, as well as multilateral institutions and processes and the ongoing efforts on Foreign NRAs to continue to address any perceived issues regarding foreign mobile termination rates”

The committee also looked at the summary of all comments filed (35 parties) with the FCC and will continue to monitor the progress of the matter at the FCC. The Secretariat circulated the comments filed amongst CANTO Members, Government Ministries and Regulators.

- **Workshop on Home Network Identifiers/Mobile Country Codes**
CANTO, in collaboration with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union and the International Telecommunications Union hosted a two-day workshop entitled “Mobile Country Code/Home Network Identifier”, in Trinidad and Tobago from the 16-17 November 2004.
The workshop created a forum for existing operators, new entrants, government officials and regulators. At the end of the workshop participants were fully apprised of the principles surrounding the use of MCC/HNI codes and the implications of using foreign codes. Seventy-two participants (17 CANTO members) attended the workshop. The workshop reports were circulated amongst the CANTO membership.

4. The need for collaboration on technical issues and standards across the Caribbean

The DRP Committee held several teleconference meetings during December 2004 and early January 2005 to discuss the situation in Grenada and the development of a Mutual Assistance Plan for CANTO

A call for assistance on behalf of Grenada was sent to all members on the 29th December 2004. Lucent, Telefonía Bonairiano and ETECSA, Cuba responded.

ETECSA hosted a meeting with the Chairman of the Disaster Preparedness Committee - Mr. Robert Williams, Chief Executive of Cable and Wireless Grenada - Mr. Ian Blanchard and Research Officer of CANTO - Ms. Teresa David.

The visiting team met with Executive President of ETECSA, Ing. Jose Antonio Fernandez and his team: First Vice President, Dr. Massimo Degano; Coordinating and Institutional Relations Manager, Eng. Mario Hernandez Lopez; Director of International Relations, Dr. Antonino Caridi; Manager of International Relations, Ms. Anais Garcia Garcia; The CANTO Director, Lic. Pedro Rodriguez Perez, of Ministerio De La Informatica Y Las Comunicaciones were also present at the meetings.

ETECSA has agreed to generously assist Grenada in their recovery efforts. The logistics and some financial costs still to be covered are being worked out for 36 fully equipped men to travel to Grenada at the earliest possible time.

ETECSA has also submitted a Proposal for the Development of a Mutual Assistance Plan for review by the Disaster Preparedness Committee. A workshop has been scheduled for the 21st and 22nd April, 2005, in Cuba.

This workshop will bring together the experts in the various member companies to discuss their disaster strategies, share their best practices and to agree on a mutual assistance plan and the way forward in the event that any of the member companies are struck by a natural disaster or an event that significantly disrupts their operations and their ability to provide service.

5. The potential regulatory issues that would arise as a result of the convergence of technologies

The Secretary General and Acting Technical manager are participants of the Working Group was set up to increase sensitization of stakeholders on the goals of the CSME with respect to Telecommunications; start a consensus-building process on how best to achieve these goals and solicit recommendations from industry experts on the policy directions that should be taken under the CSME initiative. Other CANTO members in the Working Group set up by CARICOM are: Davidson Charles, Chief Executive, Cable and Wireless Antigua, Julian Wilkins, PCS Manager, APUA, Mrs. Glenda Medford, VP, Legal & Regulatory Affairs, Barbados, Ms. Rochelle Cameron, Legal and Regulatory Advisor, Cable and Wireless, Jamaica.

The first meeting of the Working Group was held in Antigua from the 14 – 15th March, 2005. Preliminary deliberations and recommendations made are as follows:

Liberalization of the sector based on the goals and objectives of the Revised Treaty must include:

- A review of the current status of liberalization and its relationship to the CSME
- Commitment by all Member States to the Liberalization Timetable
- Reconsideration of the Treaty
- Technical support among CARICOM members
- Government and market transparency
- Strengthened collaboration with regional organizations such as CANTO, CTU, ITU- TAL, ECTEL and CITEL.
- Sharing of professional resources

Liberalization of the Sector and overcoming constraints which adversely affect the rights of users of Telecommunication Services:

- Development of regulations to deal with common access and funding
- A clearly defined dispute resolution process
- Continuous and aggressive education for the general public and public officials
- Definition of relevant interference regime.

Future policies to manage liberalization in the CSME must include:

- A framework that will allow nationals to invest in regional economies
- Skills sharing between CARICOM member states
- A harmonized regulatory framework
- Harmonized policies and legislations for establishment and accessing the resources of the Universal Service Fund
- Compatibility of Technology
- Spectrum Management harmonization across the region
- New and innovative ways of enhancing competitiveness and development
- Internet service management and governance
- Security issues
- Numbering issues
- A common dispute resolution process
- Promotion of capacity building in the region

CONCLUSION

The Secretariat continues pursue the priorities set forth in the “Bonaire Concordat” towards improving the quality of service and addressing issues of concern to the membership and will continue to use the wisdom of its members’ CEOs to guide the direction of the Association. The 2nd Meeting of CEOs will be held on the 19th June 2005, in St. Kitts and Nevis.

*The CANTO Secretariat
21 March 2001*