

## **Opening Remarks - B11 Conference**

I would like to thank very much on behalf of all of us both to Mr Adil Mina of Continental Electronics and to our Conference Co-ordinator Jeff White of National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters for welcoming us to Dallas. Continental Electronics is our main sponsor and host and Jeff and his wife Thais - in addition to a lot of other conference preparations - were instrumental in getting entry visas to the United States to many participants. This was sometimes quite difficult and time-consuming.

Let me assure you first of all that this is the regular shortwave co-ordination conference for the B11 season. We have not given up shortwave. Frequency co-ordination, the promotion of shortwave, and providing free access to accurate frequency and schedule information to listeners will continue to be our core activity. We feel strongly that a degradation of our services would only speed up large scale migration to other delivery platforms.

At the same time the HFCC Steering Board have decided to ask members for a mandate to adjust and enlarge the remit of the association.

There are some compelling reasons for doing this: TV and radio organisations for home listeners and their unions are busy discussing the future of distribution of the media content and the use of new - mainly digital - technologies. We would like to become a forum for such debate in international broadcasting. We believe that the debate should help develop a stable and effective system of content delivery and the synergy and co-operation between the old and new technologies.

A recent survey in Europe has indicated that the use of wireless distribution of radio in domestic broadcasting might be even more resilient than in TV broadcasting. Unfortunately this does not seem to be taking place in international radio. In fact an increasing number of broadcasters have either drastically reduced or completely switched off shortwave transmissions this year.

This is yet another reason why we have to broaden the scope of our activities and prevent the outflow of members. Quite logically the name HFCC - or High Frequency Co-ordination Conference would become too restrictive and consequently the name-change will be on the agenda of the Plenary Meeting on Thursday.

Time will be needed for dealing with the new agenda items during conferences. We are confident that we will save time on solving frequency collisions as a result of shortwave reductions, and also by purging the HFCC data of all inaccuracies.

Our recent decision on providing listeners an unlimited access to HFCC databases and at the same time offering broadcasters and FMOs space for the upload of programme and frequency schedules should help identify and remove the so-called wooden or reserve frequencies. Naturally frequency requirements of all organisations in the HFCC global database are kept updated and continue to be freely available on the website but we are very concerned that only few organisations have uploaded their programme and frequency schedules.

As I have already noted potential synergies between wireless and other delivery platforms will be on the agenda of future conferences. We will try to create a special programme for up to one day in the conference week on hybrid solutions, consisting of broadcast technologies complemented by internet based distribution, internet receivers and similar subjects. What is even more important - and we are going to rely on our membership in that respect - is that people responsible for content distribution are invited to that section of our conferences.

The subjects relating to the enlargement of our activities will be on the conference agenda on Thursday. We expect visits of leading personalities of some U.S. stations, and hopefully this will also be an occasion to touch on the issues of changes in distribution of international broadcasting.

Oldrich Cip, September 2011