Commission of the European Communities □ DG XIII □ Telecommunications, Information Industries and Innovation

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European Community - United States Consultations
on Telecommunication

Delegation from the European Community and the United States met
in Brussels on 4-6 February 1987 for an exchange of
information on Telecommunications.

The meeting was presided by Ambassador Michal B. Smith, Deputy
USTR and Mr Michel Carpentier, Director-General DG XIII.

The European and American delegations met to discuss a thorough
agenda (attached) covering major items of mutual interest in
telecommunications ; standardisation, testing and type approval,
technology and the regulatory environment.

These consultations follow a European fact-finding mission to the
United States in June 1986, which investigated all aspects of the
development of US telecommunications.

Community Telecommunications Policies

European representatives presented their view of European tele-
communications policy in the Community and in CEPT.

Mr Carpentier emphasised the complex political, institutional and
industrial factors which have to be taken into account in
developing a Community telecommunications policy along the
Action Lines adopted by the Council in December 1984. Several
measures (annexed) have been decided during the past three years
within this framework which will form the backbone of a unified
market in this sector.

The US stressed the need to provide an environment for the
competitive introduction of new technology. In particular, the US
delegation emphasised its concern about the access of non-EC
based firms to technical work organised by CEPT (TRAC) and the
possibility for the EC network operators to recognise
conformance tests made by third-country laboratories,
particularly in the United States.

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Conclusions

The meeting concluded that further cooperation and exchange of
information would be mutually advantageous in several   specific
areas :

-     Exchange of information between CEPT and ANSI;

-     Open Network Architecture and related concepts in Europe-and
      the US;

-     US and EC implementation of ISDN in relation to CCITT
      recommendations;

-     Proposed changes in the US regulatory environment for
      telecommunications.

In a separate meeting on February 4th, the US and EC officials
also agreed on future cooperation between the EC Commimssion and
the National Bureau of Standards.

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Attachments:
      -     Agenda
      -     Council Decisions and Commission proposals
      -     Composition of Delegations

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Trends in Telecommunications Policy

The US delegation set out recent developments in US regulatory policy, the United States recent recommendations to remove some of the restrictions on the BOC's as they are now in the AT&T consent decree, the application of OSI in public procurement and the US approach to WATTC (1988).

The EC delegation expressed concern about the FCC proposal to take the policies of foreign governments into account in its regulatory activities, the sectoral nature of such an approach, and the implications of this for US international trade policy and obligations.

The FCC responded that it has instituted an inquiry to consider the implications of the telecommunications policies of foreign governments on the price, quality, variety and technological sophistication of telecommunications equipment and services provided to US customers. The inquiry is designed to preserve competition in the US market and to find a common ground with other countries on these issues.

The Community participants also briefed the US delegation on the implementation of Community telecommunications policy with respect to competition policy, public procurement and the issue of the future regulatory environment for telecommunications in Europe.

European Initiatives

The European delegation presented the principal Community initiatives, for example, standardisation of information technology, mutual recognition of tests and type approval, ISDN and Digital cellular radio.

The current EC programmes related to telecommunications and information technology were also presented and discussed : RACE, ESPRIT, INSIS and STAR.

The Community delegations emphasised the close interrelationships between telecommunications policy and the specific programmes through the implementation of standards, the integration of networks and services and the extension of advanced tele- communications services throughout the Community.

CONCLUSIONS

The US and the EC delegations have agreed to further specific areas of cooperation during 1987-1988 :

1. The Commission and the relevant US agencies will exchange information regarding the telecommunications environment in the domestic and international context.

2. A meeting of technical experts will be organised to discuss US and EC implementation of ISDN standards based on CCITT recommendations.

3. The concept and design of Open Network Architecture (ONA) in the US is of considerable interest, and the US and EC agree to a continued exchange of information and opinion.

4. Exchange of information between European and American industrial associations in the field of standards was proposed.

5. On the sidelines of this meeting CEPT and ANSI agreed to regular exchange of information about draft telecommunications specifications.

Mr. Carpentier and Ambassador Smith agreed to review progress and developments in these areas in late 1987 and to decide then whether to reconvene an EC-US meeting to update and complete the work which has been undertaken.

In a separate meeting on February 4th, US and EC officials also agreed on cooperation between the US National Bureau of Standards (Department of Commerce) and the Community on testing for OSI standards, in particular in Trade Data Interchange, and promotion of their application.