

CITEL RES.30 (II-98)¹

**POSSIBLE COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
EUROPEAN TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDS INSTITUTE (ETSI)
AND THE INTER-AMERICAN TELECOMMUNICATION COMMISSION**

The Second Regular Meeting of the Assembly of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission, CITEL,

CONSIDERING:

That the Executive Secretary of CITEL received a communication from the Director General of ETSI suggesting the establishment of a co-operation agreement between the two organizations;

That the Second Regular Assembly of CITEL was asked to provide direction to PCC.I and the Working Group on Standards Co-ordination to determine the advisability of entering into such an arrangement with ETSI;

That comments were advanced on the advisability of such an arrangement, some of which are reflected in Annex 1 to this Resolution;

RESOLVES:

To defer a decision on the matter pending further review by PCC.I and the Standards Coordination Working Group as well as further reflection by the Member States and Associate Members of CITEL.

On the basis of the recommendation of the matter by PCC.I, to render a decision at the next meeting of COM/CITEL.

¹ CITEL/doc. 211/98 (Approved during the Fourth Plenary Session)

ANNEX
COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A MOU BETWEEN CITEL AND ETSI

(Document submitted by the Delegation of the United States of America)

In analyzing the offer by ETSI to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CITELE, we must reflect on the role and working methods of CITELE's Working Group on Standards Coordination (WGSC), the role and working methods of ETSI, and the extent to which the interests of CITELE would be supported (or not) by establishing an MOU with ETSI, a Regional Standardization Organization (RSO) outside of the Americas.

The role of CITELE's Working Group on Standards Coordination (DOC 107) is to:

- Coordinate with other Permanent Consulting Committees in those areas related to standardization in order to attain common objectives of CITELE.
- Identify organizations that influence telecommunications standards in the region and facilitate regional and global network interconnectivity and interoperability, with special emphasis on the body of standards laid down by the ITU's Standardization Telecommunication Sector,
- To promote harmonization of telecommunications standards among countries of the region so as to facilitate network interconnectivity and interoperability.

In this analysis it is important to note that the CITELE Working Group on Standards Coordination is not a standards making body. Instead, the terms of reference for the Working Group are *to facilitate network interconnectivity and interoperability* on a regional as well as on a global basis.

In order to achieve global interoperability, this working group looks first to the standards developed by the International Telecommunications Union, which operates with the participation by all recognized standards bodies, and with members of the ITU-R and ITU-T sectors. Harmonization on a regional basis should incorporate the use of standards from bodies both within and from outside the region, as appropriate, with respect to the telecommunications networks operating in the region today.

According to Document 127, the role of ETSI is to produce European standards in the field of telecommunications and undertakes pre-standardization and standardization activities in areas common to telecommunications information technology, sound and TV broadcasting. In addition, ETSI is a European organization whose membership includes numerous entities that are not members of CITELE and do not operate within the Americas. Further, Doc. 127 proposes that, "ETSI and (CITELE) have common objectives with the international standardization of (telecommunications) that there should be an internationally agreed standard with the aim of contributing to the establishment of a Global Information Infrastructure."

CITELE looks to the ITU to determine (a) if a single internationally agreed standard is necessary; and (b) to determine what such a standard would be. CITELE's WGSC is not a standards making body. Since both Member States and Associate Members of CITELE are also members of the ITU, it would seem that the most appropriate means for CITELE to contribute to the work of the ITU would be through collaboration within the Americas that could lead to common proposals from CITELE Members into the ITU. This is consistent with the approach used by CITELE in preparing for other ITU activities including preparations for the World Radiocommunication Conference 1997 (WRC'97), the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), and the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference.

1. Should CITELE consider standards developed by ETSI?

Certainly, as appropriate to achieve CITELE's objective of promoting harmonization of telecommunications standards among the countries of the region to facilitate network interconnectivity and interoperability.

2. Is a structural relationship with ETSI necessary?

We believe that a formal structural relationship between CITELE and ETSI is unnecessary. The working methods of the CITELE WGSC have been developed to allow them to consider standards, as appropriate, from all recognized standards bodies with a preference for ITU standards, but also from Europe, North America, Japan, etc.

3. Should CITELE establish MOUs with other recognized standardization organizations?

The Working Group on Standard Coordination has been one of the most active and productive of CITELE's working groups in meeting its mandates. We believe that, given this experience and the Working Group's unique mandate and structure, it would require a significant amount of effort for them to structure an appropriate MOU that could be used both with ETSI and with other recognized standards bodies around the world. We believe that such an effort would distract the group from achieving its objectives.

Recalling the effort that was necessary to develop an understanding on standards coordination across different working groups within CITELE, we would discourage the undertaking of such a project with external bodies outside of CITELE, as a diversion of time and resources from the working group's important goals.