

**GSC-16 Communiqué****ICT ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL**

Halifax, Canada  
3 November 2011

The 16th meeting of Global Standards Collaboration (GSC-16), a high-level gathering of the world's leading information and communication technologies (ICT) standards organizations, took place from 31 October to 3 November 2011 to promote innovation and collaboration and to consider common challenges. GSC-16 was hosted by the ICT Standards Advisory Council of Canada (ISACC) in Halifax, Canada. The theme of GSC-16 was ICT Accessibility for All.

With more than one hundred participants attending, GSC-16 brought together senior representatives of the Association of Radio Industries and Businesses (ARIB) and the Telecommunication Technology Committee (TTC) of Japan, the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) and the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) of the USA, the China Communications Standards Association (CCSA), the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the ICT Standards Advisory Council of Canada (ISACC), and the Telecommunications Technology Association (TTA) of Korea.

Observers in attendance included representatives from the CDMA Development Group (CDG), European Patent Office (EPO), Global ICT Standardization Forum for India (GISFI), IEC Advisory Committee on Telecommunication (ACTEL), ISO/IEC JTC 1, American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Open Mobile Alliance (OMA), and the Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers (SCTE).

Participants highlighted a number of technical priorities that are of concern for communities around the world. ICT-based global interoperable standards are critical in addressing these priorities.

In his welcoming remarks Mr. Marc Dupuis, Director General, Engineering, Planning and Standards Branch, Industry Canada, noted that GSC has a rare opportunity to discuss key issues and develop consensus on standards priorities. He also noted that global standards are critical to trade, competition, consumer choice, and equipment compatibility. In conclusion, Mr. Dupuis stressed the importance of ICT accessibility and re-iterated Canada's support for GSC resolutions on this topic.

In the light of recent natural disasters, GSC-16 member organizations recognized the important role of ICT systems in disaster prevention and relief. They agreed upon the urgent need for further development of standards - including accessibility standards - for disaster relief systems to serve individuals, ensure dissemination of post-incident information and guidance, as well as planning for the recovery and resilience of network infrastructure in the aftermath of disasters. In this context, GSC-16 member organizations will establish an Emergency Communications Task Force to support this objective with improved collaboration, while recognizing regional regulatory differences as appropriate.

Technical sessions at GSC-16 covered a broad spectrum of high interest subjects including:

- Cloud Services
- Emergency Communications
- Identity Management and Identification Systems
- ICT Accessibility
- ICT and the Environment
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) Standardization
- Internet Protocol Television (IPTV)



- Interoperability
- Machine-to-Machine (M2M) Communications / Internet of Things (IoT)
- Security and Lawful Interception
- Smart Grid
- Wireless Charging

GSC members also discussed diverse issues such as: Broadband Wireless Access, RLANs and ad-hoc Networking, Reconfigurable Radio Systems, Mobile Multimedia Broadcast and Multicast, Cybersecurity, Home Networking, Next Generation Networks, and the Internet of Things (IoT)..

The output of GSC comprises a set of resolutions - including one on Accessibility - reflecting consensus positions of the GSC members on the future direction of ICT standardization

<http://www.gsc16.ca/english/gsc16-resolution.html>.

Work will continue with existing Task Forces on Intelligent Transportation Systems, International Mobile Telecommunications, Electronic Article Surveillance, Radio Microphones, and Machine-to-Machine Standardization.

The next GSC meeting will be hosted by TTA in Korea in May, 2013.

**Background:**

The 16th Global Standards Collaboration is the latest in a series of such events that commenced in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1990. GSC provides a strategic opportunity for dialogue among senior officials from national, regional and international standards bodies and provides a venue for the leaders of the participating standards organizations and the ITU to freely exchange information on the progress of standards development in the different regions and the state of the global standards development environment, and to collaborate in planning future standards development to facilitate wide spread deployment, enable innovation, and improve security and sustainability for all.

More information on GSC-16 is available at <http://gsc16.ca>. Information on previous GSC meetings is available at the ITU repository [www.itu.int/ITU-T/gsc](http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/gsc).

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