

NEWS RELEASE

Dynamic Spectrum Alliance welcomes WRC-15 decision to preserve lower UHF bands for terrestrial TV in ITU Region 1

Official response and comment from the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance

Geneva, Switzerland. 30 November 2015: The Dynamic Spectrum Alliance supports the decision made at the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU's) World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-15) to maintain the ITU's primary allocation of the lower UHF spectrum from 470 MHz to 694 MHz to terrestrial broadcasting (TV) services until at least 2023. In doing so, ITU Member States have rejected calls to make the lower UHF spectrum co-primary for mobile broadband services; meaning services other than broadcasting will need to operate on a secondary basis in those bands. This important decision sets the stage for the globally harmonized rollout of digital television in the 470 MHz to 694/698 MHz bands, licensing of mobile broadband services on a primary basis in the 694/698 MHz to 862 MHz bands, and deployment of TV white space (TVWS) technologies that will be able to operate across the full range of unassigned or otherwise unused UHF frequencies between the 470 MHz to 862 MHz bands (as well as in the VHF bands) on a secondary basis.

Delegates from over 150 countries reached a decision to maintain the lower UHF frequency band (470-694 MHz) primarily for broadcasting in ITU Region 1 (comprised of Europe, the Middle East and Africa), as opposed to allocating it for mobile broadband on a primary or co-primary basis. This places ITU Region 1 in alignment with decisions already made for ITU Region 2 (the Americas) and Region 3 (Asia). The lower UHF bands are currently allocated for digital terrestrial TV (DTT) and this decision means that the broadcasting industry can extend their services by transitioning fully to DTT broadcasting. A significant number of investments for the roll out of DTT networks are in progress across ITU Region 1, for example in Africa, in order to catch up with Europe which has largely completed its DTT transition.

“The Dynamic Spectrum Alliance welcomes this sensible WRC decision for Region 1 to retain the lower 470-694 MHz primarily for TV broadcasting as large swathes of the region complete their digital switchover programmes over the next five years,” said Professor H. Nwana, Executive Director of the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance (DSA). “Coupled with the decision the conference has also taken to globally harmonise the 700 MHz band (694-790 MHz) for mobile broadband services, a truly needed second digital dividend is also guaranteed in Region 1 too, after the first dividend of 800 MHz (790-862 MHz). It is a win-win scenario for both the broadcasting and mobile industries in Region 1, and retaining the lower UHF bands for TV enables its dynamic sharing on a secondary basis through TV white space regulations.”

Nwana continues: “The UK regulator Ofcom recently published its proposed draft regulations to allow white space devices access to unused frequencies in the UHF TV band. These regulations would enable sharing of TV bands in the UK and other countries within Region 1 and elsewhere should follow suit in their quest to bridge the digital divide. I am glad to note that countries such as Malawi in Africa and Singapore and the Philippines in Asia are already successfully doing so, and South Africa has recently published a discussion document on TV white space.”

Both USA and Canada in Region 2 have already enacted TV white space (TVWS) rules and commercial deployments are commencing. Several countries in Region 3, namely Asia, will be working on similar rules in 2016. To further dynamic spectrum access sharing in Latin America, the Alliance recently announced that the DSA Global Summit 2016 will take place in Bogota, Colombia (26-28 April, 2016).

TVWS technology uses unassigned or otherwise unused spectrum in the UHF and VHF bands otherwise allocated to broadcast. TVWS technologies operate on a secondary basis without causing interference to primary users, such as broadcast licensees. TVWS technology has been deployed in dozens of projects all over the world, showcasing its ability to inexpensively deliver broadband and other forms of connectivity over large geographic areas. Many commercial applications for TVWS regulations are expected to be unveiled in 2016 around the world. New versions of Wi-Fi operating in TV bands are expected to exploit such TVWS regulations in these commercial deployments.

ITU Region 1 includes Europe, Africa, the Middle East (west of the Persian Gulf), Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Ukraine.

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About the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance

The Dynamic Spectrum Alliance is a global organization advocating for laws and regulations that will lead to more efficient and effective spectrum utilization. The DSA’s membership spans multinationals, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and academic, research, and other organizations from around the world, all working to create innovative solutions that will increase the amount of available spectrum to the benefit of consumers and businesses alike. For more information, visit: <http://www.dynamicspectrumalliance.org/>. Keep up to date with the latest DSA activities by following [@DynamicSpectrum](https://twitter.com/DynamicSpectrum) on Twitter, liking the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/DynamicSpectrumAlliance> or by joining the LinkedIn group <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6654268>.

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