

2012 ABU General Assembly

ABU Seoul Declaration

Asia-Pacific Broadcasters Pledge to Embrace the Digital Wave and Ensure that Digital Terrestrial Television Serves the Public Interest

Considering

- 1) that a “digital wave” of converging information and communication technologies has revolutionised the way that audiences consume, share, and interact with content and services provided by the broadcasters;
- 2) that the radio frequency spectrum is an essential resource for delivery of broadcasting services to the audiences;
- 3) that the digital terrestrial television transition, or analogue switch-off, opens up a wide frequency band in the UHF band which has a great potential to serve the public interest;
- 4) that in the past several years, the upper part of the UHF frequency band, which is allocated for terrestrial television broadcasting, has been increasingly sought by mobile telecommunication operators for their use;
- 5) that ABU members recognise that as broadcasters they have a responsibility to provide the audiences of the Asia-Pacific with knowledge and information to improve people’s lives;
- 6) that broadcasters’ role is vital to the development of a sustainable global digital or knowledge economy, creation of employment, empowerment of women and enrichment of life and work in the civil society;
- 7) that the digital wave and the newly opened frequency band can be utilized in the creation, access, communication and consumption of social developmental services provided by the broadcasters in health, education, safety of environment for the benefit of individuals and communities in under developed and deprived areas across the world .

The 2012 ABU General Assembly Declares

- 1) That ABU members work towards expanding public knowledge and understanding about the benefits of the digital wave.
- 2) That ABU members petition their national governments to get access to the frequency band opened by the analogue switch-off, in the best public interest.
- 3) That, in allocation of the newly available spectrum, the national spectrum regulators and the Govts in the Asia-Pacific consider the legitimate needs for frequency spectrum of the TV broadcasting industry.
- 4) That ABU members ensure that our organisations understand the issue as a developmental, national and corporate priority.
- 5) That ABU members explore avenues of cooperation and partnership with regional industries, governments, and other organizations in order to meet the demands of the digital wave and ensure the best use of the newly opened frequency band.
- 6) That ABU members continue to produce radio and television programs, public service announcements and new media content highlighting these issues that will inform and inspire their audiences.
- 7) That ABU members stimulate a spirit of solidarity throughout the ABU region by sharing experience and expertise, engaging in capacity building and maintaining open channels for dialogue.
- 8) That ABU members review and assess their commitment to these issues at the 50th ABU General Assembly in 2013.

Background

A “digital wave” has swept in an unprecedented era of access to information, social participation and interaction. The surge of technological progress and dissemination of information and communications technologies shows no signs of abating, and many in the Asia-Pacific region are discovering vast new economic opportunities in this information-driven world.

A young and vibrant generation in the Asia-Pacific region stands poised to reap the transformational rewards of the digital wave; broadcasters in the region must also choose to embrace the transformation to better serve their audiences. In the wake of the digital terrestrial television transition, or analogue-switch-off, broadcasters also have a responsibility to ensure that terrestrial broadcasting fulfils the universal coverage obligation of the public media and continues to be a competitive platform and innovate.

With the approval of the ABU Seoul Declaration, ABU members recognize their role as broadcasters to improve the lives of people throughout the region with knowledge and information, and to influence governments to recognise the spectrum management policies should be guided by long-term public interest rather than short-term gains.
