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Assunto: Portuguese Switchover Plan from analogue to digital - COCOM03-52

Answering to the Telecommunications Council of 20 November 2003 invitation to inform the Commission about Member States plans regarding a possible switchover from analogue to digital we are pleased to inform that, and in accordance with the structure introduced by the 3<sup>rd</sup> December working document COCOM03-52:

### **Introduction**

The eEurope 2005 Action Plan requires Member States to make public by end 2003 their intentions regarding the switchover to digital and the analogue switch-off. In order to pursue eEurope objectives the Commission requested Member States a copy of the national switchover plans by 9 January 2004.

The main reasons for publishing the national switchover plan are to create transparency in the national policy making process, improve certainty for market players, to facilitate and encourage coordination in the switchover process between Member States.

### **DTT in Portugal**

**The Portuguese regulator is now re-evaluating the economic models options for a successful implementation of the DTT in Portugal.**

**According to the results of the studies and analysis in course, a decision will be taken. In the case a new tender is launched during the first/second quarters of 2004, the regulator will then be in a more realistic position to prepare a calendar for the switchover process and subsequent phases.**

**Nevertheless, there is an intention to initiate the switchover during 2005, being the market situation evaluated after 1 year of operations, in order to support a decision about the period of time until the switch-off will last - hopefully not too long.**

**Regarding MHP, the regulator intention, as well as it was adopted in the last tender, is to encourage its implementation and adoption, for that valuating the proposals of the candidates that include MHP.**

### **Strategic Plan for switchover**

The plan for switchover to digital is in preparation for the reasons pointed out above. The outcome of the study described above will be a crucial input for the switchover policy in Portugal.

The transposition of the New Framework is at its final stage. The New Communications Law has been approved in Parliament and it will be published in the near future. The Television Act was published in August 2003 (Law no. 32/2003, of 22 of August).

### **Policy objectives**

The switchover policy objectives are mainly social, cultural, political and economic. The main social objective is to provide digital terrestrial services throughout the country and ultimately define digital broadcasting services as an universal service. Culturally digital terrestrial services are a mean or/and instrument to access the information and knowledge society. In addition digital switchover will promote national audiovisual industry as well as other activities of the value chain. Finally digital broadcasting will play an important role for accomplishing the e-Europe objectives established in the Lisbon Strategy.

### **Spectrum management**

Naturally the scenario of DVB-T introduction before the switch-off date depends on the spectrum availability in a simulcast period. Therefore at this stage it is planned and accounted for 4 national networks, in which three are SFN and one MFN built on SFNs.

After the switch off, spectrum management policy will depend on the economic model defined and implemented by the Government, which is in preparation stage. In addition other international aspects need to be taken in account such as the International Conference results and bilateral agreements with Morocco and Spain.

The main objectives for Portugal in the Conference are to obtain the maximum coverage possible and therefore spectrum availability and more flexibility in future spectrum usage.

### ***Implementation choices***

In accordance with current stage, which will define the next steps of Digital Terrestrial Television operations in Portugal, the implementation choices are also in a defining stage as they are also part of the study described above.

### ***Tentative calendar***

Ahead of the study conclusions it is not possible to advance a realist date for launching digital broadcasting services. However the end first semester 2004 is a tentative date to begin digital terrestrial services.

The switch off strategy will be evaluated one year after beginning of operations. A short transition period is recognized as an effective strategy to accomplish a successful switchover process. A possible strategy could be multiple phases' approach, which sets different regional dates for switch off.

### ***Stakeholders' involvement***

Anacom has been meeting regularly with main stakeholders such as broadcasting operators, network and service providers and consumer associations.

### ***Criteria for achievement***

The criteria will be designed in accordance with the implementation choices, which are not defined yet as described above.

### **Market assessment**

The study on digital terrestrial television to be finished by end January will assess the digital television market. Therefore by then the Portuguese regulator will be in a position to assess public intervention in the relevant market.

### **Policy obligations and incentives**

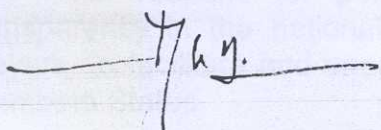
Incentives considered by the Portuguese regulator depending on the scenario models can be exemption of spectrum fees during initial phase of operations, tax's benefits for Set top box's purchases, or others.

The main obligations for the digital terrestrial operators will be coverage obligations and promotion of digital terrestrial television by facilitating access to digital broadcasting services through low-end set top box or zapping box.

### **Areas for possible EU co-ordination action**

The main possible area of co-ordination at EU level is standards harmonization.

Sincerely yours,



Álvaro Dâmaso  
Presidente do Conselho de Administração