



VII. LOOKING FORWARD: CONNECTING THE GLOBE



The FCC began implementation of the Kennard Development Initiative in Africa with regional outreach, bilateral work plans, industry involvement, and regulatory training. These activities are the beginning of a genuine partnership with the FCC's counterparts in Africa. They are an investment in issues of common concern and a cooperative step toward establishing regulatory conditions in Africa's telecommunications sector that are conducive to growth and sustainable economic development.

Over the next several months, the FCC also will work with its counterparts in developing countries in Latin America/Caribbean, Asia, and Central Europe. Chairman Kennard hopes to sign bilateral work plans with regulators in each of these regions. In Africa, we will continue to work on implementation of the three work plans and look forward to extending the Kennard Development Initiative to Francophone countries. We also hope to arrange for translation of the regulator's manual, *Connecting the Globe: A Regulator's Guide To Building A Global Information Community*, into other languages such as French and Spanish. The FCC will continue to host regulators and other officials from around the world for tailored programs at the FCC's headquarters in Washington, D.C., through its International Visitors Program and its involvement in the U.S. Telecommunications Training Institute.

During Chairman Kennard's visit to Africa and in numerous discussions with regulators who have visited the FCC, a central theme has been the desire of regulators for technical assistance to, and training of, regulatory personnel in developing countries. Clearly, despite the on-going programs through USTTI, the FCC's International Visitors Program, and the efforts of other entities, there is an immense unmet demand for such regulator training. In meetings with industry and others following the Africa visit, Chairman Kennard has shared his hope that a process could be established that could be used to provide training annually to all those who wish to have access to it. Such a process would demand a true partnership between government and industry.

In recent meetings with industry representatives, educators, and others, Chairman Kennard has initiated a dialogue on how to make this idea a reality and has encouraged industry and other volunteers to take the lead in developing the blueprint for such an idea. This blueprint – a plan to lay the foundation for a solid cooperative structure, yet with flexibility to adapt to new conditions – might involve regulatory training facilities associated with an in-region university with regional reach and aspirations or a regional telecommunications training institute sponsored by a multilateral organization. The FCC and others might contribute to the substantive training modules.

The Kennard Development Initiative and more formalized telecom regulator training are elements of a design to link the world together – in a real, literal sense – to make available the communications technologies of tomorrow and the opportunities that lie



in their wires and webpages to developing countries around the globe. This design can build communications networks connecting the markets, businesspeople, teachers, thinkers, doctors, students and children of developing countries to the entire community of nations.

This is a challenge that we can and must meet. For, as Vice President Gore noted in concluding his remarks to the ITU's Plenipotentiary conference, today's road of discovery to human achievements is a highway of light and speed that connects the largest city to the smallest village across the globe. If the world once was limited by borders and geography, it now is limited only by the borders of our imagination. Now, more than at any other time in our history, the promise of new discovery and new technologies has made it possible to renew and strengthen our oldest and most cherished values and build the 21st century our children deserve.