

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Radioamateurs, dear Guests

Let me first thank you for the kind invitation and the opportunity to say a few words on this special occasion. It's an honor and pleasure for me, to welcome you on behalf of the Swiss Regulatory and Licensing Authority, the Federal Office of Communications OFCOM to this conference of the IARU Region 1 here in Switzerland, here in Davos. It is a special occasion, not only because of the beautiful surroundings here, but because the International Amateur Radio Union celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

In these last 80 years, after the foundation of the IARU, 1925 in Paris, technology has greatly evolved and we experience changes more and more rapidly. While we had Morse code only at the beginning, we are dealing with new transmission modes and new data protocols almost every few months now.

But it's good to see – and I am quite sure you all agree with me – that despite of all the new technologies, Morse code has survived and – with the aid of you, the radioamateurs – it will survive also in the future.

In this time of rapid development, the frequency spectrum has become one of the scarce resources. More and more commercial applications claim also a piece of the cake and it's a difficult task to defend the amateur bands or even to get new bands allocated. National solutions hardly stand a chance today. Therefore, efforts have to be combined and actions coordinated to find solutions on an international scale and this is where IARU has always played and continues to play a very important role.

When I just said that national solutions hardly stand a chance, it is also fair to say that exceptionally, there may be some room for flexibility nationally if, for instance an international solution is pending and a national implementation is possible earlier. One year ago, I had the pleasure to congratulate USKA to their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary which was a relatively easy task, because I was able to bring 100 kHz as a present to the party, that is, I could announce the release of the band 7.1 to 7.2 MHz for the Swiss radioamateurs.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to bring another 100 kHz every year (. If I had known then that I would be standing in front of you one year later I would have saved a few

kHz to bring them along this year) but it goes without saying that all of you are of course welcome to use this band while you are in Switzerland.

Be it with your own equipment or with the club station here in Davos. As you probably know, we were asked by USKA to allocate a special call sign to the club station. We were happy to comply with this request and we hope that this call sign **HB80IARU** reflecting the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IARU will bring a lot of additional QSOs during this week's radio activities.

On the other hand, using your radio equipment was not your main reason to come to Davos. Looking at the number of documents you have prepared for the conference I have the feeling that this will be a very busy week which may not leave to much spare time. I have to admit that I am not familiar with all the subjects to be discussed here but I am looking forward to learn more about some of them in the course of this week. I am convinced that the friendly atmosphere and the pure mountain air here in Davos will stimulate the discussions, will help to solve problems and to find solutions. But in addition to all the hard work, there is another aspect to such a conference. An aspect I find equally important, and that is

- **the opportunity to meet people;**
- **the opportunity to make new friends;**
- **the opportunity to renew old friendships.**

Once again, I would like to congratulate IARU to its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary and wish you all a very fruitful and successful conference and a very nice and agreeable stay here in Davos.

Thank you very much