

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET BY THEHON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, POWER AND COMMUNICATIONSCommonwealth Telegraphs Partnership

Invitation to the Malta Government to Join the  
Commonwealth Telegraphs Partnership  
and to Appoint a Member to the  
Commonwealth Telecommunications Board

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My Memorandum No. 468 on the invitation to the Malta Government to join the Commonwealth Telegraphs Partnership and to appoint a Member to the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board was considered in Cabinet on the 28th August, 1965. It was agreed, as recommended in the concluding paragraph of that memorandum, that the matter be considered in the light of the outcome of the negotiations being conducted with Messrs. Cable & Wireless Limited regarding the grant of a licence to operate.

2. Direct negotiations with one of the Company's Directors, Mr R.A. Rice, have been going on since September last when he came to Malta for the purpose. Although agreement has been reached on many points, there are still difficulties on the financial and contract termination clauses which the Company has so far been unable to accept. It was, however, agreed that the licence would become effective from the 1st September, 1965, so that the new licence fee and other financial liabilities by the Company would be payable from that date. It was also agreed that payments which the

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Company was offering were made on the assumption that Malta would join the Commonwealth Telegraphs Partnership.

3. As stated in paragraph 6 of my Memorandum No. 468, at the Commonwealth Telecommunications Conference held in London in April/May, 1965, it was decided to review the organization of Commonwealth co-operation in telecommunications during the resumed Conference which will be meeting in London on the 1st March, 1966. The Review Committee, which met in Nairobi in November, 1965, and which was composed of delegations from Britain, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra-Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, has submitted a Draft Constitution for a Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (as shown in Appendix I) which will be considered at the resumed Conference in March.

4. If it is decided that Malta shall become a Member of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization, Malta would have to attend the Commonwealth Conference on Telecommunications which will be held in different Commonwealth countries at three-year intervals, the yearly meetings of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Council which will likewise be held in different Commonwealth countries, and will have to appoint a permanent Member on a Standing Committee which is expected to meet regularly in London. The travelling expenses for the Malta Members attending these Conferences will have to be borne by the Malta Government and it

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is also probable that the salary of the Member appointed on the Standing Committee, which under the present Constitution is paid from the funds of the Board, may have to be met by the Malta Government.

5. Under the present Constitution, the rate which would have to be paid by Malta towards the expenses of the Organization was estimated at £200 to £300, but the proportions for sharing the expenses of the new Organization are as yet to be decided by the Members. Another item on the Agenda that may alter the present financial arrangements is the consideration of a possible alternative to the present Payment Scheme (First Way-Leave Scheme). The Commonwealth Telegraphs Agreements for 1948 and 1963 will be modified in the light of the decisions which will be arrived at on these two points.

6. Considering that the Malta delegation at the resumed Conference which will be meeting in London in March will be signing the decisions reached at the Conference on behalf of the Malta Government and also the fact that all financial arrangements which will be made with Messrs. Cable & Wireless Ltd for the renewal of their licence are being based on the understanding that Malta will be joining the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization, it is recommended that a decision be reached, at least in principle, that Malta will become a Member of the Commonwealth Telegraphs Partnership.

16th February, 1966.

DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR A COMMONWEALTH  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ORGANISATION

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1. There shall be established an Organisation to be known as the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation.

STRUCTURE

2. The organs shall include:-
- (a) Commonwealth Conferences on Telecommunications.
  - (b) Commonwealth Telecommunications Council.
  - (c) Secretariat.

MEMBERSHIP

3. Membership shall be open to all Commonwealth Governments which signify acceptance of the duties, responsibilities and obligations of the Organisation.

4. The initial Members shall be the Partners to the Commonwealth Telegraphs Agreements 1948 and 1963 (including other Governments which have since signified their acceptance of these Agreements) on signifying acceptance of the duties, responsibilities and obligations of the Organisation.

5. On the date on which any country whose government is a Member of the Organisation ceases to be a part of the Commonwealth, the government of that country shall forthwith cease to be a Member of the Organisation.

6. Any Member may withdraw from the Organisation by giving notice in writing to the other Members. The period of any such notice shall not be less than ..... years.

PURPOSE

7. The purpose of the Organisation shall be:-
- (a) to promote the efficient exploitation and development of the Commonwealth external telecommunications system;
  - (b) to provide machinery for consultation between Members on all aspects of Commonwealth external telecommunications policy and practice of Commonwealth interest and for the dissemination of advice and information in this field;
  - (c) to administer any financial arrangements agreed by Commonwealth Conferences on Telecommunications.

COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCES ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS

8. Governmental meetings at official level shall take place, normally at three year intervals, for the consideration of policies relating to the external telecommunications of Commonwealth countries and territories.



9. Each Member of the Organisation shall appoint a representative to the Conference.

9.1 In the event that any Member is unable to attend it may, by appropriate credentials, delegate its Conference responsibilities to any other accredited Member representative.

10. Each Conference shall elect its Chairman.

11. Each Conference shall decide in which country the next Conference is to be held, bearing in mind the desirability of holding successive Conferences in different countries.

#### COMMONWEALTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

12. There shall be a Commonwealth Telecommunications Council which shall be a continuing body.

13. Each Member of the Organisation and the Colonial Ensemble of British Overseas Territories shall appoint a representative to the Council: provided that Members who have entered into formal arrangements for their external telecommunications services to be operated by a common organisation may appoint a joint representative.

14. Representatives may be accompanied by advisers at Council meetings.

15. Representatives shall be senior serving officials of external telecommunications administrations or organisations or other officials of equivalent status.

16. Since the Council is a continuing body its work will be facilitated if changes in representation are kept to a minimum.

17. The Council should meet at least once a year. The meeting at which the annual budget is considered shall be known as the Annual Meeting.

18. The Council, shall, at its Annual Meeting, elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman and, if it so decides, a second Vice-Chairman, from among its representatives. The outgoing officers shall be eligible for re-election.

19. The Chairman shall summon all meetings of the Council in accordance with the Rules of Procedure agreed by the Council for such purposes.

20. The Chairman shall ascertain that at least two-thirds of the Members undertake to be represented at any Council meeting before it is formally convened.

21. The Council shall determine where each meeting of the Council shall be held bearing in mind the desirability of holding successive meetings in different countries.



22. The functions of the Council shall be:-

- (a) to ensure the carrying out of policy laid down by Conferences;
  - (b) to consult, record agreements reached and make recommendations where appropriate on all external telecommunications matters of Commonwealth interest;
  - (c) to administer any financial arrangements agreed by Commonwealth Conferences on Telecommunications;
  - (d) to seek to achieve as time and circumstances permit, unified financial arrangements for the operation of the Commonwealth telecommunications system;
- (Note - See paragraph 25.4(ii) of the Report for reservations)
- (e) to provide an authoritative and informative source of advice for the Members;
  - (f) to draw the attention of Members to developments in the field of telecommunications and to highlight significant trends;
  - (g) to consider and recommend to Members approval of the annual budget and administer control of expenditure;
  - (h) to recommend to Members a suitable candidate for the post of General Secretary, to determine the salary and conditions of employment for this officer and delineate the scope of his activities;
  - (i) to perform such other functions as Conferences shall decide.

23. The Council shall establish a Standing Committee. The Council shall prescribe duties, responsibilities and procedures for the Standing Committee with the object of ensuring that questions of system development, exploitation and operations, and any other matters assigned to it, are dealt with promptly.

23.1 Each Council Member shall appoint a Committee Member who shall be an officer of the external telecommunications administration or organisation, or another official of equivalent status.

24. The Council shall have the power to appoint committees, specialist groups or other persons to advise the Council or to perform such specific tasks as the Council considers necessary.

25. It shall be the function of the Chairman, in consultation with the Vice-Chairman as necessary and appropriate:-

- (a) to exercise such powers as may be conferred upon him by the Council and
- (b) within the limits set by the Council, to direct the General Secretary.

#### THE SECRETARIAT

26. There shall be established a permanent Secretariat to serve the Organisation.

27. The Government of the country in which the Secretariat is located shall make simple but sufficient provision under its own laws and practices for the operation of the Secretariat.

28. The staff of the Secretariat shall comprise a General Secretary (to be appointed by the Members), senior specialists/staff (to be appointed by the Council), and other specialists/staff as may be required to enable the Secretariat to fulfill its functions.

29. Positions on the staff of the Secretariat shall be open only to nationals of countries which are Members of the Organisation and such nationals shall be equally eligible for appointment. Eligibility shall embrace equality in compensatory conditions as regards the appointment of persons from countries other than that in which the Secretariat is located.

30. The General Secretary shall be responsible directly to the Chairman of the Council and his functions shall be:-

- (a) to direct the work of the Secretariat;
- (b) to prepare the budget of the Organisation for consideration by the Council;
- (c) to control the expenditure of the Secretariat;
- (d) to advise the Chairman with respect to matters needing attention;
- (e) to make arrangements for Conferences, meetings of the Council, and any committees, specialist groups or persons appointed by the Council;
- (f) to attend, as Secretary, Conferences and meetings of the Council, and to attend other meetings as directed by the Chairman;



- (g) within the limits set by the Council or imposed by the budget, to determine the complement, salaries and conditions of employment of the Secretariat and make appointments to the staff accordingly;
  - (h) to administer the financial arrangements of the Organisation as directed by the Council;
  - (i) to exercise initiative and anticipate requirements through the collection and dissemination of all types of information likely to need consideration by any facet of the Organisation;
  - (j) to perform such other duties as may be designated by Conferences and the Council.
31. The work of the Secretariat shall be:-
- (a) to maintain and disseminate such traffic, rate, routing and financial data as are determined by the Council;
  - (b) to collect and disseminate other information as directed by the Council;
  - (c) to process material for Conferences, meetings of the Council, and committees, specialist groups, or persons appointed by the Council;
  - (d) to perform the accounting and clearing house functions of the Organisation;
  - (e) to maintain and distribute regulations as directed by the Council;
  - (f) to perform such other duties as may be directed by the General Secretary.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER COMMONWEALTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS GROUPS

32. Members may form groups for regional or other special purposes, providing arrangements contemplated by them do not conflict with agreements reached by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation and providing that the Council is kept informed of the broad objectives being pursued and of any agreements reached by such groups.

#### FINANCIAL YEAR

33. The financial year of the Organisation shall be from April 1 of one year to March 31 of the following year.



#### EXPENSES OF ORGANISATION

34. The expenses of the Organisation shall consist of:-

- (a) The cost of travelling and subsistence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council properly incurred in the due performance of their office.
- (b) The cost of Conferences, Council meetings and other meetings authorised by the Council excluding the cost of travelling, subsistence and entertainment.
- (c) The cost of Secretariat work performed in the Council Chairman's own country.
- (d) The cost of Secretariat.

#### SHARING OF EXPENSES

35. The overall expenses of the Organisation shall be shared in proportions to be agreed by Members.

#### FINANCIAL CONTROL

36. Prior to the beginning of each financial year the General Secretary shall prepare and submit a budget to the Council setting forth the estimates of expenditure for that year. Estimates of current expenses (which may include a reasonable sum in order to provide a working balance for the year) and capital expenditure shall be shown separately in the budget and shall be sub-divided under appropriate headings.

37. The Council shall forward a copy of the budget so prepared or modified to each of the Members in the form of a recommendation.

38. Adoption of the budget shall be subject to the approval of the Members. On giving their approval the Members shall make provision of the requisite funds on the basis of a cost sharing plan to be agreed by the Members.

39. Current expenses of the Organisation shall be defrayed by the General Secretary (who shall be bonded) out of funds made available by Members in accordance with the budget and as from time to time approved by the Council.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

40. The accounts of the Organisation shall be audited annually by an auditor or auditors who shall be appointed by the Council. The audit for any one year shall be completed for presentation at the next annual meeting.

41. The Council shall as soon as may be after the end of every year prepared a General Report of their proceedings for that year and attach thereto a Statement of Accounts.

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42. The Chairman shall, on the completion of every such annual General Report and Statement of Accounts and the Auditors' Report thereon, forthwith submit them to the Members.