

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CABINET BY THE  
HON. THE PRIME MINISTER

Membership of International Telecommunications Union

The purposes of the International Telecommunications Union are:-

- a) to maintain and extend international cooperation for the improvement and rational use of telecommunications of all kinds;
- b) to promote the development of technical facilities and their most efficient operation with a view to improving the efficiency of telecommunications services, increasing their usefulness and making them, so far as possible, generally available to the public;
- c) to harmonise the actions of nations in the attainment of those common ends.

2. Malta belonged to the Union by virtue of her membership of the Ensemble of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories. On attaining independence, she ceased to belong to the Ensemble.

3. Continued membership of the International Telecommunications Union is imperative for the reason that registration and international recognition of wireless frequency allocations, call-signs, etc. can only be done under the auspices of the International Telecommunications Union. Otherwise it would be impossible for Malta to continue to safeguard her present radio services and to apply for additional requirements in this field.

4. The financial implications of membership are not perfectly clear, but according to Article 15 of the Convention, each member is free to choose its class of contribution towards the Union's budget from a range varying between a 30-Unit class to a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -Unit class. Countries like Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia are in the 1-Unit class (amounting to £2,550 for 1964). It is safe to assume that the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -Unit class involving approximately £1,300 p.a. would be applicable to Malta. The unit class selected bears a relation to the area of the country, its population and the extent of telecommunications development.

5. The above contribution does not cover the expense of sending delegates to the Union's conferences. The contribution formerly payable by Malta as part of the United Kingdom Ensemble amounted to approximately £300 p.a., again excluding expenses of attendance at conferences.

6. Upon securing membership of the United Nations Organization, Malta could become a member of the International Telecommunications Union by acceding to the Convention; such a procedure would not require any 'voting in', and membership would be automatic upon the

deposit ...

L-Arkivji Nazzjonali ta' Malta

deposit of the instrument of accession with the Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union, through the intermediary of the Swiss Government. In addition, the Secretary General should also be informed direct of Malta's wish to take up membership. This procedure would be the quickest way to secure membership.

7. A Conference of the International Telecommunications Union is due to open at Geneva on the 10th October, 1964 to consider broadcasting frequencies for countries in the African Broadcasting Area. In view of Malta's proximity to Africa it is essential for Malta to make her voice heard at the Conference as otherwise serious prejudice might be suffered as a result of new frequencies being allotted to other countries which might cause interference to Malta's own frequencies, and also because such allocations might affect adversely the prospects of additional allocations for Malta.

8. It is not possible to secure membership of International Telecommunications Union by the opening of the Conference, and in order to secure Malta's representation at the Conference, the following course has been suggested by the British Government after consulting the International Telecommunications Union Secretariat, viz: a communication should be sent to the International Telecommunications Union.

- (i) explaining Malta's interest in the Conference;
- (ii) declaring it to be Malta's intention to secure membership of International Telecommunications Union as soon as U.N. membership is granted; and
- (iii) further stating that pending such action the United Kingdom Government Delegation would be authorised to represent Malta's interests at the Conference.

9. Hon. Ministers are therefore invited to endorse the course of action outlined in paragraph 8 above. It is also proposed to nominate Mr Joseph V. Galea, Inspector of Wireless Telegraphy, to attend the Conference on attachment to the British Delegation. (This has been suggested by the United Kingdom Government). Mr Galea had already attended the preparatory meeting of this Conference held last January.

2nd October, 1964.

-----