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TV TechCheck



The Weekly NAB Newsletter for Television Broadcast Engineers

Joint Declaration on DTV Harmonization Issued at FoBTV, Shanghai

The first Future of Broadcast Television (FoBTV) Summit was held last week in Shanghai, China. Organized and planned by a multi-national committee of diverse organizations including broadcasters, research organizations and standards developers, the Summit was attended by over 240 industry representatives from more than 20 countries, and included two days of presentations covering various aspects of developing and implementing next generation broadcast systems. A joint declaration was issued, calling for increased harmonization among the world's future digital television systems. While it stops short of pressing for a truly singular world DTV standard, the declaration's authors aspire "to explore global standard unification and to achieve industrial convergence with technology integration."

Stressing the efficiency and value of such commonality, the declaration focused on three fundamental principles:

- Defining the requirements of future terrestrial broadcast systems
- Exploring unified terrestrial broadcast standards
- Promoting global technology sharing

The two-page document reviews how different TV standards developed in different regions during the analog era, noting that formats have continued to further splinter in the digital age. The statement's authors believe that current technology allows a reduction in such divergence going forward, and they list multiple advantages for doing so.

The core of their argument rests on cost-effectiveness, as stated in this section of the declaration:

The world's resources are limited, and we need to avoid unnecessary spectrum and resource consumption fueled by competition between different sectors or delivery platforms. We must seek the best balance among economic prosperity, technological advances and sustainable development, and we hope to explore the possibility of cross-sectoral, cross-border and cross-regional cooperation. Low power consumption, low-cost and environmentally-friendly technology and industrial development models should be our common goals.

One of the most significant points of consensus at the Summit was unified agreement on the importance and unique societal role of the terrestrial broadcasting platform throughout the world. Signatories to the declaration include broadcasters and standardization bodies from the Americas, Europe and Asia. Among them are ATSC, NAB, PBS, CBC, ETRI, EBU, DVB, IEEE BTS, NHK, and others, including China's National Engineering Research Center of Digital Television, which hosted the two day event.

The declaration also presents a plea for ending the digital technology divide as it applies to global television. The signatories assert, "We realize that advances in broadcasting technologies should benefit both developed and developing countries. Global technology sharing should be an integral part of the future broadcast system standardization."

The timing of the declaration is appropriate for ATSC, which has just begun its exploration of a next-generation DTV standard. Timing was obviously on the mind of the Summit planners, as well, who set the announcement of the Joint Declaration in the conference program for 11:11 am local time on 11/11/11.

The declaration represents a message of unprecedented uniformity among world broadcast leaders, but it tacitly acknowledges that much work is required to meet its lofty goals. Nevertheless, the signatories conclude their declaration

with the hopeful sentiment, "We look forward to future collaboration to chart the future course of the television industry as a converged future that benefits viewers, broadcasters and manufacturers around the world."

The complete text of the declaration is available [here](#). Additional information about the FoBTV Summit can be found at www.fobtv.org.



Organizers and Sponsors of the FOBTV Summit

Left to right: Ulrich Reimers (DVB), Yasuhiro Ito (NHK), Phil Laven (DVB), Toni Fiedler (Fraunhofer), Masayuki Sugawara (NHK), Yiyun Wu (CRC), Craig Todd (Dolby), Bill Meintel (IEEE-BTS), Bill Hayes (Iowa Public Television), Jim Kutzner (PBS), Mark Richer (ATSC), Wenjun Zhang (NERC-DTV), Lieven Vermaele (EBU), Peter Siebert (DVB), Liliana Nakonechnyj (TV Globo), unidentified (NERC), Pinjian Xia (NERC-DTV), unidentified (NERC), Yunyi Zhu (SARFT), Bernard Caron (CRC), Lynn Claudy (NAB).

NAB Accepting Nomination for 2012 NAB Engineering Achievement Awards

NAB is currently accepting nominations for the 2012 NAB Engineering Achievement Awards. Established in 1959, the NAB Engineering Achievement Award is presented each year to an individual for their outstanding accomplishments in the broadcast industry. In 1991, NAB began giving awards separately for achievements in radio and television. The award winners will be recognized at the Technology Luncheon at 2012 NAB Show on April 18 in Las Vegas, Nev.

Additional information and a nomination form are available on NAB's [website](#). The deadline for nominations is January 23, 2012.

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