

Newix
Telefax No:095-873-1334152
Asmara, Eritrea

24/8/93

I acknowledge receipt of your telefax dated august 2. After leaving Asmara I have been in Addis Abeba for an extended days and therefore late to answere you. Please note that my new telephone/telefax number in Stavanger is 04-544878.

Reference is made to our lengthy discussion on the 27th of july at your office. Two major topics that require decision were raised.

1. License ownership of INMARSAT terminals in Eritrea.
2. Future status of Medisinisk Teknisk Bistandsgruppe A/S.
Continue or cease to exist?

Background

It is to be remembered that when the study to link the field with the outside world via satellite was completed in 1987 and decision made to procure and install equipments, the major problem left was how to get the license to operate them. Then came the idea that, as Norwegian passport holders, me and a Norwegian friend, very active supporter of our struggle, could create a company and apply to the Norwegian Telecommunication Authorities to give us the license to operate the satellite equipments. From that time the company that was created and registered in Norway as a share company was the owner of the license. All purchases in Norway and shipment of equipments to the field and after independence to Asmara was made under the name of the company. EPHP/ERA U.K was the source of all the finances. It is also to be remembered that in addition to the management of the satellite communication the company was also instrumental in the procurement and shipment of other sensitive items to the field.

Situation Post Independence

As the EPLF overseas organizational structure has changed after independence the time has also come to define the tasks, responsibilities and budgets of our company. The time has also come to decide who would pay the operation cost of the terminals and associated expences of the company. Here reference is made to the meeting held in London on the 20th of july 1991 with Berhane (ERA UK) and Abraham (EPHP). Copy of the opinions expressed in the meeting was sent to Dr. Nerayo and another copy delivered to you at the meeting in Asmara.

Future Status Clarification Requirment

1. Transferring license ownership. Evaluating the need of the satellite terminals under current situation it is about time to decide wether to continue to use them or only use the public network provided by the Eritrean telecom. If the satellite link is to continue there should be an office in Eritrea that would be the owner of the license and have the responsibility of managing the communication with INMARSAT and pay the bills in time. In this case Eritrea should apply for membership in the INMARSAT organization. It is not difficult to obtain membership if the country is a member of the ITU. I assume Eritrea has already become a member of the ITU. License application forms for each terminal will be sent to Asmara. These application forms will be filled out by the designated office and will be sent to the INMARSAT office in London via the Eritrean Telecommunication Authority. Consequently all the terminals in Eritrea will be decommissioned (the identity they carry now is in the Norwegian series) and later will be recommissioned in an Eritrean identity series. To use the satellite link the following entities are the partners.

Institution / Entity	Function
Equipment manufacturer	supply the terminals
Terminal owner and user	uses the terminal, pay the bills, administer the serial no.
National telecommunication authority	issue license
INMARSAT	administer the sattelites

2. The MTB A/S question. Although the license ownership by the company will be transferred to a designated office in Asmara it should be evaluated if the company has a role to play under present circumstance. If the company is to continue to exist it should be able to fulfil the requirements set by the Norwegian authorities, among others, it has to produce annual report of its activities. To do so one has to have an accountant and auditor. The company should have a capital of at least 50.000 Kroner. If the report shows that it had generated income it is taxable by 50%. Other legitimate expenses are telephone/telefax expenses used for company purposes, local transports etc. In short the following clarification is essential in the nearest future:-

Organization: where it belongs and to whom to report.

Budget: source of finance for its activities.

Proposal

Continuing to have the satellite link would provide a reliable and quick link to the international network as a back-up to existing network or when the link to the international network is needed from outside Asmara. Since the satellite line is not easily monitorable, at least from the ground outside 50 km radius from the terminal, it should be the safest when the dialog or telefax transmission requires confidentiality. Regarding the operation cost it can be said that since the number of communication satellites is increasing the cost to use the line is becoming competitive. So is the equipment. Continues manufacturing of new models and the increasing number of users is also making the price of equipments competitive. Based on these facts it is my opinion that the satellite link should continue to be available to the presidents office.

Replacement of Saturn-T

Concerning the two Saturn-T terminals carrying the identity no. 1310242, as suggested in the meeting in Asmara, I have asked ABB(formerly EB) if they would replace them by newer compact version. I am waiting for their answer if they would take back the old and how much they estimate the equipments value. Regarding new version I am told by the sales manager of the company that a new version much more compact than ever and digitized system would be released to the market in december. The cost for this version is expected to be lower.

Dispatch of the following will be made to Asmara by separate mail:

1. New application forms for all the terminals in Eritrea.
2. Copy of old completed forms of all the terminals to help when filling out the new.
3. Offer of price for the old Saturn-T terminals to be returned to ABB. (pending)
4. Offer of price for the new models to replace the Saturn -T. (pending)
5. Brochures.

Best regards,

Emnetu Tesfay
Stavanger, Norway