

**Testimony of
Dr. Gail Schoettler
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World Radiocommunication Conference 2000
To the Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
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Thank you for inviting me to discuss WRC preparation with you. The World Radiocommunication Conference is a global negotiation that is essential to our national security and economic competitiveness. Therefore, our success in these negotiations is critical and depends on thorough preparation. This international treaty conference is one country, one vote, where our ability to persuade is more important than our global power.

I will summarize the recommendations of my WRC 2000 delegation, which are similar to those made for the past 30 years. If these were implemented, WRC preparations would be much smoother and our chances of winning our positions much greater.

My delegation had 162 members, about half each from government and industry. The large delegation made our job much easier, since we had extraordinary technical expertise and the ability to cover the dozens of negotiating sessions held each day, something no other delegation could do. We also had tremendous foreign language capability in our delegation, which was very useful as we worked with other countries. Our success was due to the excellence of our members.

I was so fortunate to have very knowledgeable people assigned to me by the Defense Department (Col. Rick Reaser), NASA (Badri Younes, now at the DoD) and the FCC (Julie Buchanan). They worked with me for 6 months, organizing countless intricate details, negotiating agreements on tough issues, traveling with me, as needed, around the world to meet with key countries, and providing exceptional expertise. They managed the entire process with great skill and judgment. I couldn't have been successful without them. I strongly recommend this kind of support for future WRC ambassadors and delegations.

The State Department provided office space and support for all of us. They enabled me to travel to important meetings, both regional and bilateral, as we prepared for the WRC. They provided outstanding support at regional meetings and the WRC for all delegates. Our embassies and consulates were invaluable help everywhere. The biggest weakness is the Department's lack of resources for WRC preparations, in general, and for hosting other delegations, in particular, a key factor in building crucial relationships and support for US positions.

Other recommendations we made:

1. Engage in an extensive and vigorous outreach program with other countries before the WRC, both within our region and elsewhere. The politics of the WRC

- determine whether we win our positions or not. Commitments are often made early. Developing countries, in particular, responded very positively to our efforts to work with them in advance. Their votes often ensured our success. It is impossible to overestimate the value of reaching out to, and showing respect for, other countries when you are the world's powerhouse. In Istanbul, each delegation member was assigned a country to work with so that coordination and persuasion were managed within established relationships. This was very effective.
2. The ambassador should have suitable facilities, preferably a suite, for hosting other delegations, both for negotiations and social events. This was a very important part of the WRC 2000 success, as other delegations were truly honored to be invited to the U.S. ambassador's suite for both work and hospitality.
 3. The State Department should continue to be the lead government agency for WRC preparation, with sufficient resources to do the job well at home and abroad.
 4. The WRC ambassador should be a presidential appointee and report to a key White House official. This not only makes it far easier to convene warring parties at home and to solve internal problems, but also provides great stature internationally.
 5. The WRC ambassador should be appointed more than 6 months before the next WRC, therefore being exempt from the 6 month rule regarding special ambassadorial appointments. Building a strong team and coordinating US positions more than 6 months out would make negotiations much more effective and efficient. Leadership is critical.
 6. The delegation should be whatever size is needed to provide government's unique expertise and to meet the needs of both industry and national security.
 7. A senior executive coordinating committee, under the leadership of the White House, should be responsible for overseeing WRC preparation and resolving inter-agency disputes.
 8. Government and industry should negotiate directly to resolve their differences on key issues. Working through government intermediaries is cumbersome and less effective. Our direct negotiations in 2000 enabled our delegation to go to the WRC committed to our proposals and working together.
 9. Unclassified information should be shared openly within the delegation so everyone understands the common purpose.
 10. Congress should be kept informed of WRC issues and progress.
 11. Establish a media strategy, with the ambassador as the spokesperson. This avoids misinformation and rumors being spread at home and abroad.

I will leave a copy of our full recommendations report with the committee staff. It was an honor to lead my delegation and it is a privilege to discuss our recommendations with you.