Distinguished Lecture Tour
Thailand/Malaysia/Singapore
2-6 July 2001

Salah Aidarous

Introduction
My experience with this DLT was very positive in terms of technical and social interactions with the Asia/Pacific telecom community. This activity confirmed the important role of the ComSoc DLT program to build intellectual bridges thus joining different parts of the world together to discuss our common challenges.

The travel and changing time zones pressures were alleviated by the gracious hospitality of all the members that I have met. It my pleasure to recognize my hosts for their time and dedication to this activity, namely:

- Prof. Sawasd
- Dr. Jaafar Abou-Bakar, and Prof. Ryoishi Komiya
- Prof. Chong Tee Hiang and Prof. Kwok Li.

It is also important to recognize the role played by Byeong Lee, Naohisa Ohta, and Carole Swaim in coordinating this DLT. Their role was key in making it a success.

Throughout the tour, participation was very high with quality audience, a good mixture of academia, industry, and students. They were interested in update and live interactions covering of the current topics of communications challenges. The topic “Challenges in Management of IP-based Networks” was hitting this objective and has created a good environment for different discussions and debates. Chapter chairs also exploited this opportunity to recruit new IEEE members.

Thailand
After a day of flying and changing airports, I was very happy to see Prof. Sawasd in the Bangkok airport. After all these long hours in the air it was nice to find him waiting for me when arriving after midnight.

My talk was arranged in the Asian Institute of Technology. This was preceded by the local IEEE chapter meeting, which was organized by Dr. Kazi Ahmed. It was good opportunity to exchange some views and experience about activities in similar IEEE chapters around the world.

The talk session was a very interactive, with the audience. It shed some light on the major local challenges and influenced my views. For example the telecom environment is still unregulated. People are having the same concerns about how to get value from IP, its integration to the legacy environment, its cost, and what is the evolution in the next few years.

Malaysia
In the absence of Prof. Mohamod Ismail, Profs. Borhan Ali and Jaafar Abu-Bakar took care of the organization of the talk in the “Universiti Putra Malaysia”. There was a good
attendance from the academia and industry. Again, this provided a good environment for having an interactive discussion throughout the talk. It was clear from the discussions the focus of telecom engineers on the evolution of core and access networks, and the impact of IP on the society. Also, looking at the technology evolution, the type of new services expected in the future was a central question.

There was a visit to the Multimedia University organized by Prof. Ryoichi Komiya who is chairing the “Centre for Visual Reality and Computer Graphics”. He presented a highlight of the current research projects and directions of the center.

**Singapore**
The meeting was arranged in Nanyang Technological University, by Profs. Cheng Tee Hiang and Kwok Li. The audience was similar as in the previous cases. It looks like there a consistency in the type of issues and challenges discussed before, even some questions were repeated from the talks in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur. It was discussed the role of optical technology in the future network, how it should appropriately used, how it will impact the topology and services. Major concerns for the audience were QoS, performance, and transition issues.

**Final Remarks**
Needless to say, this DLT emphasized the important role of the ComSoc DLT program. The occasion gave the audience the right environment to exchange their experience and share ideas with others in the world facing similar challenges. While this ComSoc DLT program is a good catalyst to achieve many benefits, it is not easy to cover all areas around the world with the existing guidelines. ComSoc should further encourage and support local chapters to have their own speakers program to maximize its’ members benefits.

Finally, the organization of this DLT was perfect and went according to schedule. Thanks to Fanny Su, who did a wonderful job contacting the chapter chairs, arranging the logistics, and providing a detailed and accurate itinerary. By the way, she also managed to arrange a beautiful weather all the week.

One last remark, be careful when you walk in the streets in this part of the world. They drive on the wrong side of the road!