

News of ABU activities and the broadcasting industry in the Asia-Pacific

## ABU activities at an all-time high, General Assembly told

Despite the global economic downturn, the ABU had raised more than US\$1 million in external funding in the past year, the Ulaanbaatar General Assembly heard.

The Acting Secretary-General, David Astley, said this in his annual report to the General Assembly, which was hosted by Mongolian National Public Radio and Television (MNB) in Ulaanbaatar on 5-6 October.

Mr Astley said this had enabled the Union to substantially expand services to members since the 2008 General Assembly in Bali, particularly in the area of training and the production of content to raise public awareness of development issues.

He said that this meant that three key strategic initiatives had been achieved – namely to increase external funding, expand training activities, and assist members in the delivery of public service initiatives.

These objectives were key components of the ABU's new Strategic Plan which was adopted two years ago.

"The additional funding has enabled us to increase the level of ABU activities and capacity-building projects to an all-time high," Mr Astley said.

The General Assembly adopted a declaration on climate change resulting

from projects undertaken during the year with the Asian Development Bank and UNESCO which called on members to devote more airtime to informing the public about the causes of climate change and its solutions (see page 8 for details).

Members were also urged to lobby their governments to support an international broadcasters' treaty that will protect the rights of broadcasting organisations against copyright piracy.

The Special Topic session held on the second day of the assembly heard that piracy of broadcasters' signals remained a major problem in many countries in the region.

It also heard calls for the Union to fight for more realistic sports rights fees, to enable less affluent broadcasters to bring important sporting events to their viewers.

Over 350 delegates attended this year's annual meetings. The Technical, Sports and Programme Committee meetings were held at the Ulaanbaatar Hotel, whilst the General Assembly was held in Mongolia's Parliament Building. The Administrative Council held its meeting at the Foreign Ministry.

A new Vice-President was elected to take effect from 1 January 2010. He is Datuk Ibrahim Yahaya from RTM-Malaysia. He replaces Dato' Abdul



MNB-Mongolia's General Director Naranbaatar Myanganbuu is being interviewed at the ABU Garden as ABU's Yoshinori Imai and David Astley look on

Rahman Hamid, also from RTM-Malaysia, who did not seek re-election.

On the Administrative Council, TPT-Thailand and PBC-Pakistan were elected to replace KA-Kazakhstan and AIR-India which did not seek re-election. TRT-Turkey was re-elected for another three-year term.

On the day before the General Assembly, MNB hosted delegates on an excursion to the 13th century national park located on the Mongolian steppes, about two hours east of the capital.

After the Administrative Council meeting the previous day, each Councillor planted

a tree in a newly established 'ABU Garden' at the MNB headquarters.

The ABU Garden was an initiative of the General Director of MNB, Mr Naranbaatar Myanganbuu, and the President of RRI-Indonesia, Mr Parni Hadi.

Despite concerns about Mongolia's unpredictable weather, the week of the annual meetings produced sunny days with clear blue skies.

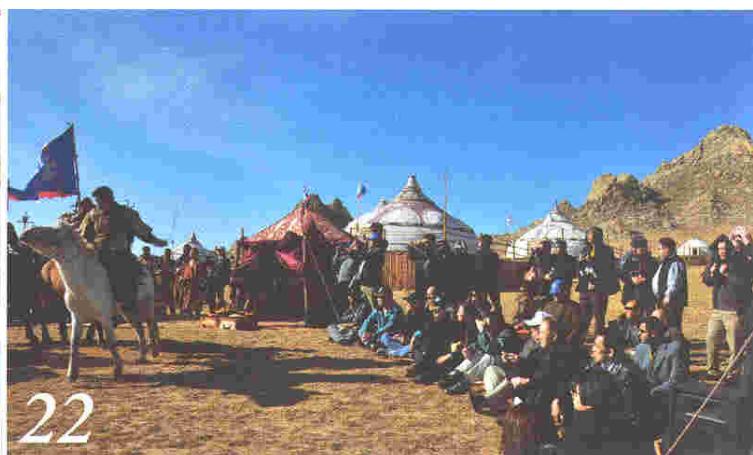
The choice of dates – which had been a topic of much discussion the previous year – turned out to be perfect because a week later Ulaanbaatar was blanketed in snow. ●

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Photo by Eric Sures, ADG



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# New Vice-President elected

The ABU General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar has elected Ibrahim Yahaya of RTM-Malaysia as one of three Vice-Presidents of the union until the end of 2013.

He succeeds Abdul Rahman Hamid of RTM-Malaysia, who did not seek re-election.

Mr Ibrahim was appointed Director-General of Malaysia's national broadcaster, Radio Television Malaysia (RTM), in March.

Before joining RTM, Mr Ibrahim was Media Advisor to the Information Minister. He has more than 25 years experience in the print and electronic media.

He served earlier as Current Affairs and Broadcasting Manager of commercial station TV3 and Editor-in-Chief of Berita Harian, a daily newspaper.

He will take up the ABU position effective on 1 January 2010.



Datuk Ibrahim Yahaya

## New AC members elected

Two new members of the ABU Administrative Council were elected during the General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar.

They are PBC-Pakistan and TPT-Thailand. Another member, TRT-Turkey, was re-elected for another three year term.

BTv-Mongolia - a new business news channel based in Ulaanbaatar - was admitted as an Associate Member.



Representatives of TRT-Turkey



Representatives of TPT-Thailand



Murtaza Solangi of PBC-Pakistan

# ABU chief departs 'on a high'

**The past year had been a most successful one for the ABU, the Acting Secretary-General, David Astley, told the General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar.**

He said that total revenues were at an all-time high, and the period since the last General Assembly had seen the highest ever level of projects and activities undertaken by the Union.

"Since the Bali General Assembly we have raised over a million US dollars in external funding for new capacity building projects, and this has enabled us to substantially increase our level of training activities," he said.

Mr Astley said that in recent years the Secretariat had been focusing on enhancing the value of ABU membership by expanding the provision of travel fellowships to members to attend training programmes, seminars and workshops.

"This was in response to feedback from ABU members that they wanted the ABU to engage in more training activities, which in turn resulted in members agreeing to the inclusion of several references in the ABU's 2007-2013 Strategic Plan to expand capacity building activities," he explained.

"The significant increases in external funding that we have achieved this year, the sponsorships achieved by the Technical Department, and the additional allocations that the News and Sports departments have made for training, have enabled us to fully achieve those strategic initiatives in the ABU's Strategic Plan that relate to increasing revenues from external sources and increasing training opportunities for members."

**"What we have achieved is not the work of one person – it was a team effort"**

Mr Astley said that the big increase in external funding in 2008/09 had enabled the Union to reduce reliance on subscription income during the global economic downturn.

"More significantly, these initiatives have enabled a large number of ABU members to receive more back in travel fellowships and production grants than they have paid for their annual subscription to the ABU," he added.

Mr Astley presented a video, which had been produced by John Barton, highlighting the key achievements of each department.

He said that an area of activity to which he had given particular personal attention this year was the initiative being taken by the ABU to improve reporting on climate change and to promote the production of more programming and public service messaging to expand public knowledge and understanding about climate change and its solutions.

**"We have raised over a million US dollars in external funding for new capacity building projects, and this has enabled us to substantially increase our level of training activities"**

He outlined how the ABU, along with the EBU, had helped UNESCO to organise a conference in Paris in September on the role of broadcast media in raising awareness of climate change.

Mr Astley said that the 'Paris Declaration on Broadcast Media and Climate Change' which had resulted from that conference,



David Astley

had been the catalyst for the ABU to look at its own declaration on climate change to reflect the outputs of the projects that it had been undertaking in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (see story on page 8).

changing attitudes in the wider business community."

At the end of his report he told members that he would be leaving the ABU at the end of June next year to pursue a publishing venture and take up a

He said he hoped that ABU members would make a conscious effort to follow-up on the recommendations of the Paris and Ulaanbaatar declarations because so many of the countries in the ABU region were already being adversely impacted by the effects of climate change.

"I am not sure that many members have yet given a great deal of thought to their own carbon footprints and standards for environmental management, but now is the time to do so because media organisations can play an influential role in

position with another international media organisation.

"I am proud of what we have achieved in the past seven years, and I am pleased to be leaving after a year in which we have seen so many successes. It is great to be leaving on a high," he said.

"But what we have achieved is not the work of one person – it was a team effort – and I want to take this opportunity to thank all those ABU staff members who have contributed to the growth of the ABU during the years that I have been Secretary-General." ●