

## ***Vietnam to host the ABU General Assembly for the first time***

**21 November 2005, Hanoi** - The 42nd General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) will take place in Hanoi from November 26-28.

Vietnam's national TV and radio agencies, Radio the Voice of Vietnam (VOV) and Vietnam Television (VTV) will host the ABU General Assembly.

This is the first time the ABU General Assembly is being hosted in Vietnam since the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)'s inception in 1964.

Over 400 broadcasters and invited observers from international organisations and other agencies will attend the ABU General Assembly and associated meetings.

The ABU's Full and Additional Full members will elect a new President during a Restricted Working Session on 26 November, the first day of the General Assembly. The President will be chosen from among the 51 Full members, and will officially begin his three-year term from 1 January 2006.

The need to elect a new ABU President arose when Katsuji Ebisawa, NHK-Japan's President, resigned from his company position on 25 January this year and automatically gave up his ABU presidency, a post he has held since 1999.

Since Mr Ebisawa's resignation, the ABU's longest-serving Vice President, Zainal Abidin Iberahim of RTM-Malaysia, took over as the organisation's Acting President. Mr Iberahim is currently the Malaysian public broadcaster's Director of News and Current Affairs.

A number of delegates have already arrived in Hanoi to discuss News, Sport, Programme and Technical developments in meetings preceding the General Assembly.

Additionally, a Special Topic session - 'Broadcasting beyond 2005' will explore how converging technologies, new business models, new consumer demands and lifestyle factors are changing the face of the broadcasting industry.

"We are currently experiencing a transition towards a 'ubiquitous media environment' which is an exciting phase for broadcasters and consumers alike. On the other hand, it is never more crucial for broadcasters from both developed and developing countries to keep themselves abreast of technological developments, especially new standards and platforms that arise, or risk being left far behind," said David Astley, Secretary-General of the ABU.

The role of radio and television broadcasters during natural disasters and crises is another important topic to be discussed.

The ABU is a non-profit, non-government, professional association of broadcasting organisations, formed in 1964 to facilitate the development of broadcasting in the Asia-Pacific region and to organise cooperative activities amongst its members including State and private radio and television broadcasters, suppliers of telecoms, IT and audio-visual services in the Asia-Pacific.