



## **AS OF 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER, BAHRAIN'S FIRST TELECOMMUNICATIONS MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS REGULATION COMES INTO EFFECT**

**MANAMA – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004** –The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) today announced the publication of its regulation on Mergers and Acquisitions in the Telecommunications sector, thus bringing it in line with best international practices.

The regulation, issued by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, aims to ensure that when mergers, acquisitions or joint ventures take place, it is not at the expense of healthy competition or the consumers. It is a tool that allows TRA to analyze such transactions and where appropriate gives TRA the power to prohibit them or impose conditions.

The Regulation also contains a notification form that must be used whenever a telecommunications company is considering a possible merger or acquisition. This form contains the details that the TRA needs to be provided with so as to be able to assess any proposed transaction.

As with all other TRA regulations, this one is the result of a series of consultations. Based on the comments received the TRA amended it where appropriate to ensure that it met best practices and was fair and workable.

Commenting on the announcement, General Director of the TRA, Mr. A. Andreas Avgousti said, "The telecommunications regime of the Kingdom of Bahrain matches the highest standards of transparency and accountability set by well established telecommunications markets. The Mergers Regulation provides the same level of transparency that other regimes offer so that investors know the rules in advance of seeking to carry out such transactions. This helps to further cement their confidence in the system. Consumers have their rights protected by the TRA and competitors know that transactions that would undermine competition in the market would not be allowed."

The Regulation comes into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2004.

## **About the TRA**

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established by Legislative Decree No. 48 promulgating the Telecommunications Law. The TRA is an independent body and its duties and powers include, among other things, protecting the interests of subscribers and users and promoting effective and fair competition among existing and new licensed operators. More information regarding the TRA can be viewed at [www.tra.org.bh](http://www.tra.org.bh)