



## Meeting the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Whilst pondering about how to approach this editorial** I was thinking about the degree to which satellite is used in all spheres of life from entertainment to healthcare and education to exploration. Satellite operators in Europe are busy fulfilling these requirements and also the technology trends that are expected to be big in 2008 – MSS, FSS, HDTV, DTH, broadband via satellite. The launch manifest for this year is very busy. Inmarsat will be sending up two satellites this year, Telenor have already sent up THOR, Hispasat is working on Amazonas 2 due for launch in 2009. There are many new satellites on many company drawing boards. Keeping up with demand for capacity is key, and this demand is being driven by next generation communications. We are talking about mobility - being able to take your content of choice with you wherever and whenever you wish. We are also talking about the demand for High Definition TV, whether it does take off in a big way remains to be seen but if the demand is there, it must be satisfied. Direct-To-Home TV is another one to watch. The demand for specific regional television may be met through DTH services.

In the Middle East and North Africa region specifically there is a shortage of capacity that has been well documented. This is ironic as these regions are probably the ones that would benefit from satellite the most and here we are not talking about DTH services or HDTV. We're talking about the basic needs of a country such as healthcare and education – about providing vital training for farmers in remote villages and bolstering humanitarian aid where that is required.

NIGCOMSAT –1 was launched in May 2007 and there are further plans to augment the amount of capacity available, particularly to the African region. However, there is a chasm that has been allowed to open between the satellite services that Europe can gain access to and the access that the Middle East and African region has. In the middle East we are seeing new players emerging and planning to launch new satellites in the near future, such as Yahsat. Now the demand in these regions is growing exponentially, companies are always seeking new ways and means of using the available bandwidth efficiently.

There has been a great deal of encouragement from Middle Eastern governments for local enterprises to grow capacity instead of capacity coming from elsewhere. Whatever the solution, it is a problem that must urgently be addressed so that satellite can deliver the basics to those who need them.

**Helen Jameson - Editor  
Satellite Evolution EMEA**

