Technical Specification Group Services and System Aspects Meeting #17, Biarritz, France

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Source: **Nokia, Siemens**

Title: **Considerations about Migration from SIM to UICC/USIM**

Document for: **Discussion**

Agenda Item: **7.1**

At the recent SA1#17 meeting in Durango, USA, a vivid discussion took place about the introduction of new functionality for the Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) in Rel-4, being already available for the USIM; this discussion could not be concluded and thus resulted in an LS to SA#17 (S1-021853). This contribution aims at illuminating the background and at stimulating a discussion regarding the usage and benefits of both SIM and USIM.

While designing the 3GPP System, the highly successful concept of the SIM was adopted by creating the USIM, which is essentially an evolved and future-proof SIM with additional functionality such as enhanced storage capabilities, multiple application (USIM) storage on the same UICC and enhanced and mutual authentication. With the evolution of the GSM system, the logical step forward was to also deploy the USIM for future GSM/GERAN systems. As a consequence, it was decided to stop the evolution of the SIM, eventually resulting in TS 51.011 being solely available in R99 and Rel-4 versions, but not anymore in later releases.

In that sense, the SIM should be understood as the legacy solution, whereas all evolution in functionality impacts UICCs with the USIM application and potentially additional applications like the ISIM. Thus, with the rollout of 3G systems, the migration from SIM to UICC/USIM should take place to enable all users to benefit from the enhanced functionality provided by the UICC/USIM.

The discussion in SA1 was motivated by the diverging functionality between the SIM and USIM, as described above. In order to clarify the issue and to boost the migration from SIM to UICC/USIM in the future, the following questions should be addressed.

What are the obstacles, if any, for the vendors and especially for the operators to start comprehensive USIM deployment?

What corrective actions need to be taken in 3GPP to avoid these obstacles?