3GPP TSG RAN Plenary Meeting #16   **RP-020375**
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Source:	Nokia
Title:	Rel-4 Protocols backwards compatibility
Agenda item:	**7**
Document for:	Discussion

TSG RAN#11 addressed the protocol backwards compatibility and started the backwards compatibility for the Rel'99 protocols (RRC/Iub/Iur etc). Following the progress it would be beneficial to consider the backwards compatibility from Release 4 point of view as well.

The Release'4 situation needs to be addressed a bit more in-depth that just Release level to allow decisions per specification rather than starting the backwards compatibility at one go for all specs, as done for Release'99 which in some cases was not always good idea for all specifications.

- Iub/Iur/Iu specifications: The Rel'99 work has very much stabilised and there would basically need to be one round of focused Rel'4 corrections.
- RRC specifications: The Rel'99 is experiencing quite many corrections/clarification and many of the discussions cause changes to be reflected in later Release only (Release 4 or 5). This process can not be made more difficult at this point in time and thus Rel'4 RRC should be omitted from the backwards compatibility discussions at this point in time.
- Other specifications: Backwards compatibility should be considered as well and general one round of WGs meetings should elapse to allow the review of Release'4 specific features.

Thus the following is suggested:

- TSG RAN WGs are tasked to review the Rel'4 specs and try to identify still necessary corrections.
- The target is set for Release'4 backwards compatibility to start from 09/2002 onwards with the exception of the RRC (25.331) specifications. RRC backwards compatibility for Rel'4 should be evaluated at a later stage once Rel'99 based test cases become widely usable as well.