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| **Agenda item: PL 1.8, 1.15, 1.16, 3.1, 4.1; ADM 1.1, 1.2, 17** | **Document C17/111-E** |
| **2 May 2017** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General |
| CONCLUSIONS OF THE RADIOCOMMUNICATION ADVISORY GROUP |

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| SummaryThe Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) met in Geneva on 26-28 April 2017. The purpose of this document is to report on the conclusions of that meeting which are relating to the Agenda of the Council, as requested by RAG.Action requiredThe Council is invited to **note** this report. |

**1 Report on progress on the Union's headquarters premises Varembé-2 project: status, detailed specification *(D 588) (Council 2017 Agenda Item 1.8)***

RAG noted the report on ITU-R Study Group activities, in particular the increased participation in Study Group meetings and the consequent logistical challenges related to adequate-sized room availability. RAG advised that an ITU-wide mechanism should be put in place to provide adequate availability of rooms for core statutory ITU activities. The issue of available rooms for official ITU meetings may become more pressing when the Headquarter premises are reconfigured. Therefore, it would be important to take into account the need for sufficient rooms in the requirements for the new ITU building.

**2. ITU role as supervisory authority of the international registration system for space assets under the draft space protocol *(Council D 576)
(Council 2017 Agenda Item 1.15)***

RAG noted the information provided in the Director’s report on space protocol related issues.

**3. Draft four-year rolling Operational plan *(Council 2017 Agenda Item 1.16)***

RAG noted the key elements of the draft rolling Operational Plan for the ITU-R for the period 2018-2021, in particular the additional outcome indicators that were included for each objective to better measure the impact of the related key performance indicator.

RAG also noted the projection of the financial resources allocation to BR outputs for 2018-2021.

RAG endorsed the proposed draft ITU-R rolling Operational Plan for 2018-2021 with some amendments, which have been incorporated in the version submitted to the Council.

RAG further noted with thanks the proposed draft rolling Operational Plan for 2018-2021 of the General Secretariat.

**4. Elaboration of the Strategic and Financial Plans for the Union for 2020-2023 *(Council 2017 Agenda Item 3.1)***

RAG also noted the projection of the financial resources allocation to BR outputs for 2018-2021.

RAG considered Doc. RAG17/9 from the Russian Federation, which proposes additional outcome indicators and other improvements to the ITU-R Operational Plan. RAG noted that such proposal could be taken into consideration when developing the Strategic Plan and the corresponding Operational Plans for the next cycle, as the current ones were adopted by the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2014.

RAG requested the Director to take into consideration the following aspects for the preparation of the Strategic Plan and the corresponding ITU-R Operational Plans for the coming cycle:

* to distinguish between the objectives of the ITU-R Sector and those of the Bureau;
* to ensure that the statistical values (indicators) are collected from trustworthy sources

**5. Sales of, and free online access to, ITU publications
*(Res. 66, Dec. 12, Council D 571, D 574) (Council 2017 Agenda Item 4.1)***

RAG noted with satisfaction that the free online access policy continued to provide a platform for a large dissemination of ITU-R Recommendations and welcomed the Director’s initiative to extend the free access to all ITU-R Handbooks.

**6. *ADM***

***6.1* Draft biennial budget of the ITU for 2018-2019 *(Dec.5) (ADM agenda item 1.1)***

RAG noted the draft proposed budget for the Radiocommunication Sector for the 2018-2019 timeframe, pending the approval by Council-17 of the 2018-2019 budget of the Union.

RAG considered Doc. RAG17/10 from the Russian Federation, which draws attention to the fact that in recent decades, more and more attention has been focused on efforts to increase the efficiency of radio-spectrum and satellite-orbit use. Ample evidence of this is to be seen in the ever-increasing numbers of participants at world radiocommunication conferences (WRCs), with some 2 000 having been registered at WRC-97 (held in 1997), and over 3 300 at WRC-15 (held in 2015). At the same time, there is a significant increase in the types, complexity and volume of the tasks being accomplished by the staff of BR, which essentially constitutes the executive machinery of the international spectrum and satellite orbit management system.

The document contains an analysis of financial resources allocated to the ITU-R and human resources in the Radiocommunication Bureau during the period 1996-2017. This analysis highlights the significant reduction of the ITU-R budget during last years and draws attention to the proposed further reduction in the ITU-R draft budget for the period 2018-2019. It shows that the ITU-R budget is proposed to be reduced in a greater extend comparing with the respective budget reductions in other ITU organs for the same period. It also raises a number of issues related to BR staff reduction during last years that, as a result, leads to the situation where the BR is not able to fulfill anymore its regulatory obligations due to the lack of financial and human resources combined with increased complexity of tasks as well as the growing number and complexity of satellite network filings, which generate significant additional work for the BR.

The conclusion states that the problems identified above are due in large measure to a reduction in the financial and human resources made available to the Radiocommunication Sector in recent years (including a steep reduction in BR’s workforce), and that measures need to be taken rapidly to ensure fulfilment of the increasingly complex objectives of the Bureau. This position was widely supported by RAG participants.

An explanation was given by the Director on the variation of staff levels over the years, stemming back to the early 1990’s when there was up to a two-year delay in the processing of filings against RR No. **9.38** regulatory time limit of four months for processing CR/R submissions as outlined in the Radio Regulations. He explained that when cost recovery measures were put in place there was a reduction, to some extent, in the submission of filings. This relative decrease, coupled with new software applications that made processing more efficient, allowed for the staff reduction occurred during his tenure.

However, a new backlog has been developing over the past 12-18 months, due to a large increase in the number and complexity of both GSO and Non-GSO satellite network filings. RAG concluded that Member States may bring these concerns to the Council if they so wish, for which the Summary of Conclusions of the present RAG meeting could be cited by them as a reference. RAG also stressed the need to adopt a proportional and balanced approach in the financing of the ITU Sectors and the General Secretariat that should take into account the recent increase in the workload of the Radiocommunication Bureau and the related expectations of the membership. RAG also recommended to the Director to inform the Council about these concerns in his report.

***6.2* Cost Recovery for the processing of Satellite network Filings *(D 482(MOD))* Proposed modification to Council Decision 482 *(ADM agenda item 1.2)***

RAG considered Doc. RAG17/11 from the Russian Federation, which addresses the issue of processing of filings for non-GSO FSS systems, cost recovery for such filings as well as possible actions required from the Council-17 to deal with the increase of processing time of non-GSO FSS filings and resulted in the delay of GSO FSS filings publication as well.

RAG noted that Council Decision 482 does not fully accommodate cost recovery for non-GSO FSS systems submitted to the BR recently (during the last 12-18 months). There is a substantial difference (in some cases more than 10 times) between the cut-off limit of units established by Council Decision 482 and the actual number of units required to process extensive non-GSO FSS networks filings. It is recognized that this is, among other issues, the result of the complexity of these non-GSO FSS systems and the huge number and complexity of their examination procedure. This resulted not only in delaying non-GSO FSS filings publication but GSO FSS filings publication as well.

RAG advised the BR Director to inform Council-17 of this ongoing consideration.

RAG also advised the BR Director to inform Council about the following two possible options for the cost recovery of processing by the BR of extensive non-GSO FSS filings:

* to compensate the cost for processing of non-GSO FSS filings by the BR through the ITU Budget. For this purpose BR Director is invited to assess and report to the Council-17 possible cost which could not be recovered for non-GSO FSS filings when applying Council Decision 482 in force. It is noted that this increase of the budget should include financial support for future development of EPFD validation software once Recommendation ITU-R S.1503-2 is completed;
* to revise Council Decision 482 through the development of specific cost recovery procedure for extensive non-GSO FSS networks. For this purpose, the BR Director is invited to clarify technical issues of such a procedure, in consultation with relevant ITU-R Study Groups and the RRB, in particular whether there is a possibility for the individual non‑GSO filings (API/coordination/notification) containing:
1. non-homogeneous satellite orbits with differing altitudes and inclinations, or
2. different constellation configurations,

to be separated into filings containing each individual constellation or individual types of satellite orbit, for the purposes of processing by the BR.

With respect to the issue of how the BR should process modifications to non-GSO filings when specific orbital characteristics are changed (whether some flexibility should be allowed or not), it is noted that this question is currently under consideration within WP 4A under the issue of future evolution of Recommendation ITU-R S.1503.

RAG further invited the Director to request the Council to provide guidance on how to address the issue of cost recovery of the non-GSO FSS filings without adverse impact on the ITU’s satellite network filing process.

***6.3* Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union
*(Res. 191) (ADM agenda item 17)***

RAG considered Doc. RAG17/5 from the Chairman of ITU-R Study Group 1, on the interaction between ITU-R SG 1 and ITU-D SG 1 on the WTDC Resolution 9 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) activities between 2014 and 2017. RAG recognized that, despite the many exchanges between the two sectors as shown in Doc. INFO/3, the comments made by ITU-R were not fully taken into consideration and properly reflected in the drafting of the final report for Resolution 9. RAG stressed the need to ensure that the main thrust of Resolution 9, which is still valid, is carried out without duplicating efforts in the two Sectors, while making certain that the work carried out by ITU-D is consistent with that of ITU-R.

RAG also considered Doc. RAG17/15 from France, which proposes a Liaison Statement to be sent to the TDAG to convey the above-mentioned concerns. RAG decided to send a Liaison Statement to the TDAG to reflect those concerns and suggest possible improvements on cooperation and coordination between ITU-R and ITU-D on WTDC Resolution 9. The Liaison Statement also contains the RAG view that the concerns of ITU-R on the Res.9 Report need to be taken into account before it is published and considered by WTDC-17.

RAG considered Doc. RAG17/8 from the Russian Federation, proposing the establishment of a joint ITU Coordination Committee for Vocabulary. RAG supported the proposal, and noted that it had been sent to Council for its consideration.

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