



Brief Guide to ITU Conference Documents

Conferences and assemblies organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) produce a variety of documents. Each type of document has a particular purpose, and all documents have a specific structure which helps to identify the document.

Document symbols – What do they mean?

Since 1947, official documents for all ITU conferences and assemblies are issued in a standard format that includes:

- a masthead bearing the name (and acronym), place and dates of the conference/assembly
- a document symbol

The document symbol will always include:

- a serial number (within the conference/assembly)
- a letter indicating the language of the document
 - A = Arabic
 - C = Chinese
 - E = English
 - F = French
 - R = Russian
 - S = Spanish

The document symbol may also include one or more of the following:

- an acronym for the type of document (the main series of documents, Contributions, does not have an acronym)
 - DL = Limited distribution document
 - DT = Temporary document
 - INF / INFO = Information document
- a designator indicating changes or additions to a document that has already been issued
 - Addendum – indicates an addition of text to a previously issued document
 - Corrigendum – contains a modification of a specific part of an existing document to correct errors, revise wording or reorganize text
 - Revision – indicates revised text that supersedes a previously issued document. A revision replaces the original document.

Examples:

- Document No. 133-E
- Addendum No. 2 to Document No. 24-S / Document No. 24-S (Add. 2)

- Document No. DL/24-A
- Corrigendum No. 1 to Document No. DT/125-F
- Revision No. 3 to Document No. 32-E / Document No. 32-E (Rev. 3)

Types of conference documents

Contributions constitute the main series of documents for any conference. They include, but are not limited to, proposals for the work of the conference, administrative reports, minutes of meetings, policy statements, and draft texts ready for approval by the conference.

Limited Distribution documents (DL) were working documents for which the distribution in hard copy was limited to those likely to be immediately interested in the work of the Committee, Subcommittee or Working Group concerned. With the advent of “paperless” meetings, DL documents are no longer produced as a separate type of document; they are now part of the Temporary documents (DT) type.

Temporary documents (DT) are working documents created during meeting sessions and include draft working text of Committee, Subcommittee, Working Group, etc.

Information documents (INF / INFO) bring information to the attention of the delegates but do not require a decision. They are not translated and are available in the language provided by the contributor.

Blue documents: In ITU treaty-making conferences, the approval process requires that proposed treaty text be submitted to plenary meetings for two formal readings. The texts submitted to plenary meetings for first reading are printed on blue paper and are called “blue documents.” In the past, blue documents were often issued separately from the series of Contribution documents and did not have a serial number. In recent times, blue documents are issued as part of the Contribution documents.

Pink documents: In ITU treaty-making conferences, the approval process requires that proposed treaty text be submitted to plenary meetings for two formal readings. The texts submitted to plenary meetings for second reading are printed on pink paper and are called “pink documents.” In general, text in a pink document is almost final, and there will not be any significant discussion or changes to be made. The text as approved after second reading will become the final treaty text to be signed at the close of the conference. In the past, pink documents were often issued separately from the series of Contribution documents and did not have a serial number. In recent times, pink documents are issued as part of the Contribution documents.

Languages

Between 1865 and 1947, ITU had only one official language: French. All conference documents in this period were prepared by the ITU secretariat in French only.

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Between 1952 and 1998, the main series of conference documents, called Contributions, was translated into English, French and Spanish. Other types of conference documents were not usually translated; they are available in English only or in the language provided by the contributor.

Starting with the 2002 Plenipotentiary Conference, Contributions are translated into the 6 official languages of the Union: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish. Other types of conference documents are not usually translated; they are available in English only or in the language provided by the contributor.

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