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ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2014

BUSAN, KOREA

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ROOM B

SIXTH MEETING OF COMMITTEE 6

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>> CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon everyone. If you could take your seats. And we're about to commence.

Good afternoon everyone. This is the Sixth meeting of Committee 6. We have an agenda available which is document ADM/34. I just have to report, though, that the Secretariat is still preparing the document, the DT for the draft financial plan of the Union, taking into account the new contributory units that have come in, that were revised by Dr. Touré yesterday. And Dr. Touré would like to be present for that discussion. So because of that, we will be concluding with item 8 on ADM/34.

So to commence the discussion this afternoon, we will be looking at proposed revision to Resolution 144, or document DT/14. So could whoever was leading that group present that document, please. U.S. Please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Good afternoon. Could we move to the second agenda item? I'm having computer problems. Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So we will move to the discussion of the proposed revision to Resolution 25, in DT/15. So if the person who was leading the discussion on that could present that document, please.

Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We met a couple days ago and the group reached an agreement, but there was a proposal from the UAE that the document was re-discussed again for a small change. And the UAE sent this to a considerable number of Delegations informally. And we agreed to a text. However, this morning we were discussing some more editorial changes to the text, so it's in order to clarify that. But as I can see now, there was no reply for that.

So I'm not really sure how we're going to proceed with this.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Mr. Canazza, we could either meet in the coffee break this afternoon or if it would be preferable for you, the Secretariat is available to assist in providing a room and doing some coordination.

Thank you, Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I guess we need just agreement from every party involved. So I guess we could come back after coffee break and I will do that.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Canazza. But also please call on the Secretariat if they can provide some assistance.

Now, the U.S. Are you ready? If you could introduce the proposed revision to Resolution 144. Thank you, U.S.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chairman.

Yes, Res 144, we have -- we agreed to send the U.S. proposal to a DT, and during -- we had one comment from the UAE that is not included in the draft DT that I'm looking at here. But it was agreed to by CITEL. We discussed it in our previous meeting, and it was agreed to by CITEL. And so what I propose is that we send this document to you at the conclusion of this meeting, and we could then -- I'm not sure how to proceed after that, but we have agreed in CITEL to the change that the UAE has proposed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S. And thank you for your work on this.

If you could send that through to us, and then we will make that revision and post it as a further rev of the DT, and then we can discuss it in a meeting coming up.

So if we now move to the proposed revision to decision 12, this is DT/22. And if I could ask Mr. Timorov to introduce the document, please.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is based on a proposal from unified groups. We had informal consultations, and after publication there were comments from the Arab Group with regard to item "recognizing n). We think the issue is not fully reflected, and I think that perhaps the easiest solution would be to eliminate this item and then move on further. Obviously if this is okay with the Arab Group.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Could I ask the Arab Group if that solution was acceptable?

Now, that solution proposed by Mr. Timorov seems like it is acceptable. So with everyone's agreement, we can send this off to the Editorial Committee.

Thank you all.

Now moving on to -- Russian Federation, please.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chair.

My apologies, I'm taking up a bit of time. I would like that thank all the participants for their discussion of this decision, decision 19, which was the object of this effort.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: And thanks to you, too.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair. My apologies. What I understood is that the DT/22 was adopted. Yet I would like to ask a clarification on the issue, "Instructs the Secretary-General." The total of sales and free downloads per year covering the last five years, in the initial document it was beginning in 2007. But now it seems that we're not indicating a reference year.

Now in 2015 Council will deal with this, so I'm wondering whether or not we need to highlight this fact or not.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mali. I'll just ask Mr. Ba to respond to that.

>> SECRETARY OF THE SESSION: Thank you, Madam Chair, and good afternoon everyone.

I think if we want to be very clear, we could say starting in 2009, if we want to ensure that we're making a reference relative to 2015 and the Conference meeting that will take place in that year, and that will cover the five years. I think The Honorable delegate from Mali did preside over that Working Group. I'm wondering if that's okay with him and if we could put 2009 so that we cover this five-year period.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba.

Mali, is that acceptable?

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think that would be all right.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So with that we can approve the document and send it on its way to the Editorial Committee. And thank you all for your work.

Our next is a proposed revision to Resolution 11, that is document DT/23. And I'd ask the UAE if they could introduce this DT please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So Resolution 11, well, we met in a small group and we discussed amendments on ITU events, ITU Telecom events, and we came to an agreement on this document. I want to highlight that the Secretary-General of the ITU, Dr. Hamadoun Touré, took part in the proceedings of this small group, and made comments and presented his point of view on the amendments to this Resolution.

Now the conclusions of our efforts are before you for adoption.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, UAE.

Now are there any comments on document DT/23? I see none. So once again, we can approve the document in Com 6 and send it through to the editorial committee.

And thank you very much. Thank you, UAE, for your work Chairing that ad hoc group.

If we can next move on to the proposed revision to Resolution 157, and that is DT/25. And if I could call upon Saudi Arabia to introduce that document. Thank you, Saudi Arabia.

>> SAUDIA ARABIA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon everyone.

I would like to say that Saudi Arabia is not responsible for this document.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Sorry.

Argentina.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Chair.

Yes, this is a proposal from the Americas in relation to Resolution 157. We received a number of comments on some unclear points following the presentation of this document, and we agreed that those comments would be submitted to us to be incorporated in the text. However, we have still not received any contribution. The text is to be found in document DT/25. So we need to know whether we can approve this text now or whether comments have yet to be submitted. I repeat, we haven't received any contributions yet.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Argentina. And apologies for that confusion. Thank you, Argentina. I'll just ask Mr. Ba to explain the one edit that there is in that document that does come from Saudi Arabia.

>> SECRETARY OF THE SESSION: Thank you, Madam Chair, and many thanks to The Honorable delegate from CITEL.

Now, it's just that the contribution that was presented in Committee 6 earlier, we had in observation from Saudi Arabia. And we discussed this with Saudi Arabia off line and we made a small modification to "Decides" in the last "Further resolves," the last sentence. So this was the only thing that we had to deal with, with Saudi Arabia, in Resolution 157. So that is the only thing that we needed to take on board. This is the only amendment which took place.

And once again our apologies for our confusion between the representative of CITEL and the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Now, with that clarification, and the document DT/25 which does contain that amendment -- Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mali really approves the document overall. Just one Question, however, on item 5 of "Instructs the Secretary-General in collaboration with the BDT." Now, we are encouraging projects developed by various sources, taking into account the objectives under Resolution 171. We would ask the private and public Sector and the University systems, and I was wondering whether regional organizations don't have a role to play here as well under item 5. So this is really something that we wanted to have clarification on.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mali.

United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Many thanks, Madam Chair.

I have a clarification, not a request, for an amendment. I have an explanation on the paragraph that instructs the Council to participate with all of the Member States and regional organizations to receive guarantees on financing before any -- the execution of any initiatives.

I was wondering how the Council is going to establish this kind of partnership, given that initiatives are regional in nature and are implemented at the regional level. How will the Council deal with all of the Member States in this case and how will this kind of partnership work? How will it be implemented as per paragraph "Instructs the Council?" It's the last paragraph of the document, page 4.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that clarification and question, UAE. I'll just ask Mr. Ba and then the Secretariat to respond, Mr. Ba.

>> SECRETARY OF THE SESSION: Thank you, Chair. To respond to Mali's question, I think that yes it would be a good idea to add regional groups to or inter-regional groups under paragraph 5.

Now, as for the comment or question raised by the United Arab Emirates, I don't know if my colleagues from the BDT might not be a better party to answer this question or, say, a representative from CITEL, since the document emanates from them.

>> CHAIRMAN: CITEL, please.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you, Chairman.

We extend our thanks for that question. Our intention here in this instruction was to take into account all the activities which are proposed. There is a way to have Member States and regional groups to reach an agreement about how we are going to prioritize the activities which need to be carried out. Because we know that there are many requests received and they go beyond what we can agree upon in regional initiatives and other types of programmes and initiatives coming in wanting to be implemented, so what we want is to establish an inclusive dialog to speak about how priorities can be established and how we can contribute to different types of funding. We know that there are budgetary limits on what activities can be carried out and what initiatives can be implemented.

So we want to find a solution to this through a participatory approach.

If that's not clear enough, we're quite happy to offer further explanations.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Argentina.

Did the BDT wish to make a comment? I understand BDT did not have a further comment. BDT?

>> BDT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Indeed ITU especially for this BDT headquarters is the reason we are working so closely on the regional organizations and all the funding agencies to encourage partnerships. But the points made by the delegate from CITEL, how to prioritize and how to fund with the budgetary constraints, is also very important to take into account. So we will just take a note of that and then we will just review and come back.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Now, with that clarification from Argentina and from the BDT, and with the inclusion of the reference to regional organizations in paragraph 5, are we ready to endorse this document?

It seems we are. So this is another that we can send -- Argentina, thank you.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you, Chairman.

Sorry to interrupt. We just wanted to know whether we understood this correctly. What we understood from Mali was that they wanted to build in regional offices, not regional organizations. We don't see any downside there, but could we just make sure we understood the wording? Is it regional offices?

>> CHAIRMAN: Mali, could you clarify?

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mali is making reference to the regional as raised by the Chair.

>> CHAIRMAN: So not regional offices, but regional organizations. So with that clarification, it seems that we are ready to endorse this document and send it through to the Editorial Committee. So once again, thank you everyone, and thank you, Argentina.

The next item is number 7, which is requests for exemption from any financial contribution to defraying expenses relating to participation in the work of ITU. PP14/61. Mr. Clark, please.

>> ITU: On behalf of the Secretary-General, I'm pleased to present document 61, requests for exemption from any financial contribution to defraying expenses related to the participation in the work of ITU.

The requests received from regional and International organizations for exemption from fees have been examined by the various sessions of Council. Exemptions are valid until the following Plenipotentiary Conference. The Council Working Group on finance and human resources called for a review of eligibility criteria for exemptions to help bring greater clarity, consistency and fairness between paying and nonpaying members.

Taking into account the outcomes of the Council Working Group on finance and human resources, document 61 recommends that Plenipotentiary 14 approve the entities recommended by the Secretary-General and instruct Council to undertake a review of the criteria and adjust the list accordingly.

As an interim measure, document 61 further recommends that Plenipotentiary 14 approve a short-term extension of the list of exempted entities, until this review and adjustment by Council is completed.

And as a reminder for Delegations, the exemptions are recommended according to a series of criteria approved by Council or set by Council, including that these entities offer reciprocal benefits, that they be International and regional organizations, and that they be nonprofit making.

Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Clark.

So with that, I'll open the floor for any comments. Argentina, please.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you, Chair.

We would like to express our thanks for the introduction of this document. Just a small editorial change. In the Spanish version, when we referred to the InterAmerican telecommunications Commission, CITEL, in the Spanish version the word "conference" appears. That just needs to be corrected. The name is currently incorrect in the Spanish version.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Argentina. We will take a note of that.

United States, please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. The United States has been one of the proponents for the re-evaluation of the criteria adopted in 2000. Considering the title budgetary situation, we note with concern the upward trend in exemption requests and that currently one in five Sector Members is exempt from fees.

We support the underlying concept for the criteria where an entity offers reciprocal benefits to ITU in exchange for membership. Nevertheless, the current criteria seems to be too broad, leading similar organizations to be treated differently.

The United States supports a short-term extension of the exemptions requested until such time Council reviews and adjusts the criteria. But I have question on the technical point. In the action required in the document, under 2, it says "to instruct the Council to review the criteria for exemption and adjust the list accordingly." But there is no Resolution attached, nor does it specify that we want Council to review the underlying criteria with the view potentially to change it.

Could you clarify what is the best vehicle to make sure that this instruction makes it to Council very clearly? This matter has a significant budgetary impact and should be treated with some importance.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S.

I'll ask Mr. Clark if he could comment.

>> ITU: Thank you, Chair.

On the issue of procedure, I'd appreciate actually if we could consult our legal counsel. I can comment on the substance of the document, but on the issue of the best way to present something to the Plenipotentiary, I think it would be good if we consult legal.

>> CHAIRMAN: Mr. Guillot?

>> ITU: Thank you, Madam.

In proposal terms, there are two possibilities here, in my opinion. Obviously the Plenipotentiary Conference could adopt a Resolution for the attention of the Council.

Another, in my opinion, slightly more flexible way would be for the Plenipotentiary decision to be built into the minutes of the plenary, and those minutes could then be sent to the Council for action. So there are two potential courses of action here from a proposal point of view.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Guillot.

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

It has been the views of many colleagues, including ours, that we have to take the most simplest action and avoid having Resolutions having "considering, noting" and so on and so forth. If you could reflect the matter in the simplest manner in the matter of the plenary, it will have the same effect.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran.

Are people generally happy with that course of action if the two are presented in terms of their effect -- USA, please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: I agree that the simpler course of action is often preferred. But I just want it to -- just being reflected in the minutes, I don't want it to slip through the cracks. I think it's a matter of importance.

I notice that document 53 includes a new Resolution that instructs the Council to review the practice of exempting entities from membership fees. Could we add language that instructs Council to review the underlying criteria, with the view to potentially change it? So we're not just changing the current list, but I want it very clearly stated that what we want to review is the underlying criteria in order to potentially be able to apply something that is more fair and balanced.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, U.S. Could you repeat that suggestion that you had, for inclusion of the text in another Resolution?

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Sure.

I don't have the full document in front of me. I only have my note, which I hope is correct. But I typed it about a month ago.

I have that document 53 includes a new Resolution that has an instruction for Council to review the practice of exempting entities from membership fees. But it does not mention the underlying criteria, and I was wondering if they could just add another sentence that says "to review the underlying criteria for exempting entities."

So both reviewing the practice, but also the underlying criteria.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, US.

Mr. Clark, please.

>> ITU: Thank you, Chair.

The suggestion from the U.S. Delegation is actually quite a practical one. If you look at document 53, which is a draft Resolution, it covers a number of areas. But one of those areas in point 6 is to review the practice of exempting entities from membership fees based on criteria such as reciprocity, and if necessary make changes to the eligibility criteria.

So you could possibly add language there to address the concerns raised.

And this is a document -- this is a Resolution that has a "resolves to instruct the Council" to take a number of actions. So this is included in document 53.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, everybody, for your patience. We were just clarifying that in fact the document under discussion is one for Com 5. So this could be resolved very simply by Com 6 providing a note to that effect to Com 5, and for them to add that additional language into that new Resolution.

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. If already there exists a Resolution that we could simply add something in the operative part of that, no problem. But this element added to the operative part should be consistent with the title and with the preamble. We should not make a mixture of everything and say okay, we have a Resolution, put Apples and other things together. We should not. We should be consistent with the title and with the preamble. If it's consistent, no problem. If it's not consistent, a simple matter of the plenary is sufficient.

I don't have document 53 or any Resolution of Committee 5. I don't know what is the title or preamble. But that is something that we should be careful of, Chairman.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran. I understand that there was consistency between the title and the subject matter of the new Resolution, and so once again that this would be an easy solution for us.

So with that, the proposal -- Sweden, please.

>> SWEDEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Could I add the comment regarding the list of organizations but maybe you would like me to come back to that later on or do you want me to raise it now? Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: I think now, Sweden, thank you.

>> SWEDEN: Thank you very much.

Well, regarding one of the cases at least, number two, we are still not convinced that we should say no for the R Sector. We know that we were participating in the Council discussions on the issue. However, we have discussed it further and it may be appropriate to say yes also for the R Sector for that organization.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sweden.

Thank you, Sweden.

We will just give Mr. Rancy the floor to answer that question. Mr. Rancy?

>> DIRECTOR BR: Thank you. Yes, I have no problem with the Swedish proposal.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sweden. We will make that adjustment.

Iran.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Could we have the logic why we said no and why we now say yes? There must be some logic or there is some criteria that we said no at that time and now we say yes. So is that argument no longer valid?

>> CHAIRMAN: Mr. Clark.

>> ITU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So for each of the entities that make a request, in the General-Secretariat we assess whether or not they are International or regional. Second we look at are they a nonprofit. And then the third question being are there reciprocal benefits?

And so in the case of where we go by Sector, you'll see that the ITU-D Sector determined that there were reciprocal benefits and that there is a good fit between the work of the sector and the entity requesting.

In the case of the R Sector, they saw less of a fit, given the technical work of the sector and the nature of the work for the sector. So that was the reason for the proposal.

>> CHAIRMAN: Sweden, please.

>> SWEDEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Yes, we note the discussion that took place at the Council meeting and the indication from Mr. Clark that there was less, let's say, interest in the R Sector compared to the D Sector. However, we have been discussing with the organization and we believe that there are issues, especially maybe in the future also, that one of great interest both for the R sector and D Sector. We know the close connection between broadband that is discussed in the R Sector and broadband as discussed in the D Sector and so on. So we believe there is an advantage for the R Sector also in this case.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sweden.

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. It's not the question of advantage or disadvantage. It is application of criteria. Currently criteria does not permit that. If in the future if that will happen, there is a question in the future, if they have a question in the future they come to the Council. So we shouldn't ignore the criteria, we should give sufficient support to the strict application of the criteria by the Secretariat.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran.

Our proposal is that we will continue this discussion during the coffee break and then come back following that with a proposal for the meeting, if that's acceptable.

Thank you.

If we can then move on to agenda item 8, which is options for the Union's headquarters premises over the long-term, PP14/57 rev 1. And if I could ask Mr. Ransome to introduce the document. Mr. Ransome, please.

>> ITU: Thank you, Madam Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, dear colleagues, it's my honor to introduce document 57, which corresponds to a request from Council 14 to make a report to PP. The report corresponds to recommendation 14.6 from Council for a decision on four possible options which were raised in Council document C14/50.

This for the long-term future of the Union's headquarters premises. The four options being to replace the Varembé building and renovate the site. To renovate extensively the Varembé building and the rest of the site. To rent premises locally to the current site. Or to relocate the headquarters of the Union. And those options were also referenced in a contribution from UAE in Council 14. And Council 14 decided to expand the criteria for selection comparison between these options, to include a much broader range of issues. So document 57 contains aspects on buildings technology, financial issues, quality of life issues, other human resource issues, and the Secretariat has endeavored to present the four options in a format which allows comparison between them.

And the document ends with an overview in tabular form of those possible options. The Plenipot conference is invited to consider these options and if possible to decide on one of the options.

If I may with Madam Chair's indulgence mention also that there is an information document related to this same matter, which is information document 8, which I can describe briefly or that can be left until later.

>> CHAIRMAN: If you could go on, Mr. Ransome.

>> ITU: Sure. I'll do just that.

In Council 14 it was mentioned that the Union has -- the Secretariat has commissioned an expert architect to make an assessment of the headquarters site of the Union and possible ways of renovating and replacing the Varembé building.

That extensive work is now reported and is distilled down into a very short summary in information document 8, which also contains a link by which the entire architect study can be downloaded by delegates.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ransome. I'll now open the floor for any comments or any questions to the Secretariat on the proposal.

Spain, please.

>> SPAIN: Thank you. Perhaps before we make comments I could ask the Secretariat to explain briefly the content of this document, this informative document 8. I have not yet had an opportunity to read it, and it might be useful to have a small presentation of it.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Spain.

Japan, please.

>> JAPAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. And good afternoon everyone.

First of all, I'd like to thank the ITU Secretariat for preparation. And considering the fact that the renovation costs of the United Nations building in Geneva have increased from the beginning, we think it's important to define the plan and to discuss before we decide to go forward.

Concerning the circumstances of ITU financial decisions, also, it is difficult to lead to the construction plan of the building and report as of now. So Japan thinks that we need to further study, for example, under Council Working Group.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Japan.

United States, please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States acknowledges the Varembé building does not meet current standards. It cannot be renovated to comply with several key areas, such as accessibility. We acknowledge that not making a decision will not solve the situation. Nevertheless, considering the significant financial implication, a decision cannot be taken lightly nor rushed.

We appreciate the inclusion of the other buildings in the options presented. As we had noted at Council, this -- a decision cannot be taken in a piecemeal fashion. It has to reflect the entire picture. Indeed, the document notes that the tower will fall short on building performance as of 2017, meaning that the tower already has obligatory measures which will have to be resolved in a short term. The alternatives presented validate our concern at Council.

The initial estimate of 3 million a year for 50 years is only one component of the real needs in the medium and long-term.

Whereas the document now includes additional alternatives, we do not believe all possibilities have been exhausted. We agree with the point Japan made that the issue of scope has not been fully exhausted. One of the main concerns we expressed at the last session of Council is that whereas the Secretariat has been in close collaboration with the host country, the foreign ministry and the appropriate local organizations, no representative from the membership has been included in the discussion. We iterate our request that if the membership is responsible for financing this building project, the membership need to be involved in the discussion, especially when it comes to the scope of the project. We do not believe we have sufficient information at this time to decide on the appropriate option to pursue.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S.

United Kingdom, please.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The United Kingdom would like to add their thanks to the Secretariat for the work that has gone into preparing this document, and we appreciate the information contained in it very much.

But I would also like to agree with the previous speakers that we acknowledge a decision needs to be made. We acknowledge that there are problems here that need to be resolved. But we also believe this is a great undertaking and an opportunity for us all who work with the ITU, and it should not be made in a hurry. We, too, would like to look forward to more information on details such as on scope of project, on further alternatives, on considering such issues as a whole of lifecycle, and maintenance. The issues raised by my United States colleagues on the life left for the tower and the needs that may need to be addressed in 2017. These are all important issues that we would -- that we believe need to be considered further.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UK.

Germany, you're asking for the floor. Germany.

>> GERMANY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We also appreciate the information provided here by the Secretariat. But in order not to take too much time from you, we also think that some further study is necessary on that, and so we associate ourselves with the speakers from Japan, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, that it is too early to take a decision at this stage.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Germany.

I have Sweden and Australia asking for the floor. Sweden, please. >> SWEDEN: We thank you very much, Madam Chair.

In order to be brief, I'll associate myself with the previous speakers that there are a number of issues that need further consideration before we can take a decision.

I also would like to highlight the need to look into the real requirements of the Union for the next 10 to 20 years, to see what is the necessary size of the building. There is also a need to look at sharing facilities with other organizations in Geneva and the UN family. It may not be necessary for each organization to have exactly the same facilities available. There maybe be a possibility to coordinate then between the organizations.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sweden.

Australia, please.

>> AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair.

Australia associates with the comments made by the previous speakers and we won't go into further detail, as our comments have already been made.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Australia.

El Salvador, please. UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I wanted to recall the UAE document from this year's Council in May in Geneva on this topic. The proposal which was made at that Council session related to one of the potential choices for the Union's buildings, namely the fourth option "Relocation of the Union HQ." You'll recall -- those who participated in this year's Council will recall the UAE's proposal for a study which is being asked for in relation to the four options. So a case study regarding the advantages and financial risks of relocating the HQ. So there is a UAE document on that. We need to bear in mind a number of criteria here, and we thank the Secretariat for having established this list of criteria and begun this study.

I know that this document contains responses to a number of the criteria which have previously been mentioned, and I wanted to recall that here concerning the paragraph which is being discussed.

We would like to echo what others have said about the importance of giving equal weight to the different options. We need to weigh up the pros and cons in financial and operational terms for each of these options. And we place particular focus on the potential relocation of the HQ.

We would also like to ask the room a question, namely, what is the next step? What should we do next about these proposals?

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE.

I will ask Mr. Ransome if he could respond to the request from Spain to give a bit more detail about the information document. Mr. Ransome?

>> ITU: Yes, of course. And thanks to Spain and thanks to the other Member States for their questions.

Spain's question concerned information document 8, which I can briefly introduce. The architect study that was commissioned by ITU, the secretariat, considered various aspects of potential use of the existing headquarters site. The site is divided into land parcels, one set of which ITU has rights over. The adjacent parcels are owned by the State of Geneva.

So there was a question on what was possible to construct and renovate on the existing land parcels. What variants were possible and which other land parcels they would involve. And what were the associated technical risks and opportunities in utilizing adjacent parcels of land.

The second question was the budget to be set for a building project or a renovation project at this time. There is a Swiss architect Professional Association Standard, and according to that standard there are set tasks to do at this phase, the initial phases of a potential project. And the idea of the architect's study at this stage is to resolve a budget with a possible variance of plus or minus 15 percent.

So the delivery of the architect study considered five possible variants, which were heavy renovation of Varembé, with extension to bringing the facilities, which correspond to the Secretary General's vision for that building.

Building adjacent to the existing Varembé building, and then demolishing the existing building after the construction.

Building constraints to the ITU land parcel or building without that constraint.

And building across part of the existing Varembé building, meaning that a stage is constructed, Varembé is partially demolished, the building is finished and the rest of the Varembé is demolished in stages.

In the view of the architect commissioned by the ITU Secretariat, but was also working with Swiss technical authorities, the FIPWA (?) Who works with International building, was that there was no a priori legal or technical impediment to the variants which were suggested. And all possible variants which were considered corresponded to projects whose estimated costs, including all aspects, fell within a financial envelope which was previously mentioned to Council 14, and that was a complete envelope for the project of 150 million francs.

So my suggestion, the Secretary-General's suggestion at the end of document 8 was that given that there were no additional constraints identified by the architect, should there be an international architecture competition to create a building on this site great interest could be expected and innovative solutions could be expected.

One further conclusion was that an extensive renovation of the Varembé building with an extension in its size corresponding to the vision of the Secretary-General was not financially attractive, compared with building replacement.

So that is my introduction to information document 8.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, very much, Mr.  Ransome.

Spain, please.

>> SPAIN: Thank you, Chair, and thanks to the secretariat for presenting that document.

I have a question and also a statement. My statement falls in line with what the majority of Delegations have said. I'd stress that of the options which we are currently studying, I don't know if some of them might be a bit restrictive in nature. It might be good to be a bit more ambitious in future phases of our considerations, as some Delegations have suggested. We might consider pooling resources with other organizations in Geneva. And we have to bear in mind that a renovation might end up with fewer, less surface area on the one hand, but better use of surface area on the other hand.

Now, regardless of which options we look at, as well as a full financial report on the implication, we have to think about how we're going to pay for it in the coming years. The financial obligations which each of these options represent are quite considerable. As the document says, we're talking about 7 to 9 million francs per year, and we have to bear in mind the budget and the Union's financial circumstances. So we need to think about what we might need to do to face up to those costs without incurring problems down the line.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Spain.

I have a proposal as there is a lot of interest in the subject, and I think a lot of people have been putting quite a bit of thought into how we might go forward. And we ourselves have to find a way to go forward and how we take this -- pass this document that we have in front of us. So I wonder if we might ask our colleague from Spain if he could lead an ad hoc group on the issue, with assistance from the secretariat, to try and develop a way forward and bring it back to our Committee. Would that be acceptable, Spain?

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. No problem with any distinguished colleagues to lead any group dealing with this matter.

But I should bear in mind some of the recently pronounced and previous options indicated may not be workable. I do not understand "office sharing." What does it mean? You divide ITU, space service Department go to building one? Tourist going to building two? Information go to building 3? Is this office sharing? What does it mean "office sharing?" What about the integrity of the Union which next year has 150 years of its existence? One of the oldest organizations of the United Nations. Are we coming to the other organizations saying please give us some rooms?

We have to have the group look into the matter quite carefully. So those options need to be excluded if it is not workable. The other extreme options, transfer of the headquarters from -- to other countries also needs to be carefully examined.

And I wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Secretariat for the very valuable and very precise and very concise and in-depth to the best of their knowledge, I say to the best of their knowledge at this stage. They provide all aspects of the situations. So we need to look at that one quite carefully.

Having said that, Chairman, 52 years is the lifetime of the -- has passed from the building of the 1962 building. How many years you can go? You postponed in 2002, you said we had financial difficulty, and people reduced the amount of their contribution. There is a limit to that. Having said that, you cannot continue with the existing building without doing anything. You have to provide a certain degree of security. You have to provide a certain degree of security and there is the important issue of the accessibility, Chairman. So you have to do that. So what is the -- so the comparison of that. So we need to do that one.

Now, if the group is going to discuss, they are going to discuss the issue by the UAE. What is the next step? Do we have a Council Working Group on that? Do we have in that Council Working Group a representative of, let us say, the Swiss Government or not? And do we have -- this is the situation we have to discuss quite carefully. And I don't think that we should take the situation that okay, let's leave it to the next four years, let's leave it. We should have some timeline on that.

And if you look into the matter quite carefully, when we look around the ITU, we see that every organization made a considerable amount of expansions. Look at WIPO and see. How many buildings? WHO? The only thing ITU has on this building from 1962, we had the Montbrillant in 1995 and the tower, which I don't know if the tower was efficient space oriented, efficient or not. So these are the issues that we have to look into the matter not from the piecemeal approach but from the very global approach.

So our distinguished colleagues from Spain, if you look into the matter, we should look at it from the reality and from the perspective in the future of the Union, but not saying that we don't have money today. Let's leave it for another 50 years.

Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, truly we are faced with the complex problem. And at the same time it's an important issue. To my mind it's not possible right now to take a decision or to find a miraculous solution or even during the PP to do so.

You know very well, Madam, that there are options on the table. They have been presented in the document. These are the options that have been given to the PP, to give us food for thought and to come up with a decision.

As you know, we have to choose the best option possible for the Union. We have to look at everything here. The financial issues, renovation, costs, and so on and so forth. You just said a few moments ago, Madam, that there might be the possibility of creating an ad hoc group presided by Spain. Madam Chair, I'm a bit surprised. What are we going to ask the ad hoc group to do? What will be their mandate? It seems to me the document we have before us, document 8, gives us sufficient data. It's an information document to help us, to give us the data to take a decision. The group that you've proposed, Madam, won't change anything. Why? Because we already have an information document.

To be brief, I'd like to add my voice to those who have spoken before me in reaffirming that this is a very important subject, a complex subject, which to my mind, Madam, requires us to put in place a mechanism that will let us take a decision. If it's not possible during the PP, the PP which we are all participating in, if we cannot find a solution here and now to the solution, what will be the future mechanism that will lead us to a conclusion and a solution?

Is there another body that will be able to take a decision on the Varembé building? Do we have any means for looking for some other mechanism? Can we ask the next Council to take a decision? Document Number 8 is what we have before us, and I think that we need to propose a practical way forward.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE.

Just briefly in response to that, I think that that would be the purpose of the group. It would be looking at a process for taking this forward if a decision cannot be made here at this PP. What would be the option for making that decision in the future? Would it be a Council Working Group, as a number of delegates have suggested? So that would be the purpose.

China, please.

>> CHINA: Thank you, Chairman.

We thank the Secretariat for the exhaustive document. Indeed, we think this document has analyzed almost all the possible options. We admit that this question is a very complex one. We need to consider a lot of factors and possibilities. We need to go into depth to study this question. However, we also should be aware that this issue is very urgent. We should have sufficient, secure time, and it's about the smooth proceeding of the work of the ITU.

We think that PP is a very appropriate occasion to discuss and determine the most appropriate solution. At least here in this PP we should determine the best possible way ahead, way forward, in order for the Secretariat to find the most practical way to resolve this issue.

For China, we think option 1 and option 2 are sort of workable. Also, we agree that we must ensure that the financial sustainability of the ITU should be ensured.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, China.

Switzerland, please.

>> SWITZERLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair.

On behalf of the Swiss Delegation, I also wanted to thank the Secretariat for the documents that they have presented to us.

As for Switzerland, we note that the Varembé building, as explained in the document, no longer meets standards under Swiss legislation. So given this context, we see the problem. And given the four options that the secretariat has given us, we do have preferences.

Now, on the basis of what our own experts are saying, experts which look at these kinds of issues with organizations like the ITU, the United States Delegation mentioned these experts. Now, these discussions are technical in nature among experts, and our experts are saying that the best solution would indeed be to build a new building.

Now, we don't want to get into the brass tacks of numbers now, because we know what the experts have said. We have heard what other Delegations have said. They have said that we need figures. We have to look at the figures. So we are not really proposing the creation of an ad hoc group that would evaluate those questions. But let's keep in mind that we have a position as a host country, and given that situation Switzerland is only expressing its wish to add willingness to give the ITU the best conditions possible. Since we're talking about Geneva, since you have the United Nations office for Europe in Geneva, you have approximately 250 missions, be they foreign missions or nongovernmental organizations who have their headquarters in Geneva, and who are up to speed on all the things that are going on at the ITU and all other specialized agencies, so we're saying as the host country that we offer the best possibilities, the best situation for the ITU to continue to work within the framework of the United Nations as it has been doing since the end of the war.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Switzerland.

We will take a coffee break now until 5 past 4:00. We have got a number of other speakers still on our list. We will ask Mr. Canazza to see if he can clarify that matter about finalizing his document, as well as the question about the arrears issue.

So see you at 5 past 4:00.

Thank you.

(Break until 16:05)

>> CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. We are slightly delayed coming back because there has been some further work on Resolution 25.

I think we have an agreement and we will have a document to you shortly on that. So I have on my list the UK, Mali and Pakistan. This is to speak on the Varembé issue.

So the UK, please.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I asked to take the floor before the break because obviously the UK would be happy to participate in any ad hoc group set up here to discuss this issue. It is an important issue.

But we would also concur with the comments made before the break by the UAE and by Spain. We think their discussion here is a useful one, but what we're hearing is that people don't feel ready to make a decision at this Plenipotentiary yet.

So we would very much welcome an opportunity to work with colleagues to look at various options, to ensure that what the ITU gets is a modern, fit for purpose, and affordable building that gives it flexibility as it goes into the future, hopefully in the next 150 years.

We think the ad hoc group would be most useful if we could use it to prepare and come up with proposals for how that discussion might happen in the next -- as we go forward in a smaller group.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UK.

That would be my thoughts exactly about the best way to proceed and what the ad hoc group would do. So thank you for giving us a very clear understanding about how the ad hoc group chaired by Spain could take this forward.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam.

I don't have any problem with the idea of an ad hoc group. But we would just like to draw your attention to the fact that the Swiss statement, which stressed that the current building doesn't meet safety, environmental, and other Swiss laws and undoubtedly other European countries' laws, that has to be taken into account. We also need to bear in mind that there is staff working in these buildings in conditions which are less than ideal.

So a decision needs to be taken. We can't take a decision at this Plenipotentiary, but we need to develop a mechanism for the decision to be made. The more we delay this decision, the more complex it will be, the more costs will be involved, and the higher the risk that we will struggle with this.

So we need to bear in mind all of these circumstances, particularly the conditions in which our staff are working. That's the emphasis which Mali wishes to place on the matter regarding the buildings, the Varembé building in particular.

>> CHAIRMAN: I thank you for those important points, Mali.

Pakistan, please.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Mrs. Chairman.

Just to inform the desire of UAE to participate in this small group that you have just decided to establish and give it to Spain to Chair it.

Thank you so much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE. That's very welcome.

Tunisia, please.

>> TUNISIA: Thank, Madam.

Tunisia would first like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent document that they have provided us with. That is one thing.

The second thing now, as long as the final objective is to ensure that the ITU has a building which meets standards, and we know that today the building does present some risks, we think that setting up an ad hoc group is something that we could endorse. And Tunisia would obviously like to take part in the discussions of this group.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thanks to you, Tunisia.

Germany, please.

>> GERMANY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

While we also support the decision to set up an ad hoc group on the issue and we are willing to join the group, just to give one thought on what might be also elaborated in the group is, well, we have heard that there is the -- a sum of money has been mentioned of about 150 million Swiss francs in order to establish a new building in line with the visions of the Secretary-General. Our thought is, is this the only option for such a building? Wouldn't it be also an idea, let's say, to consider one option way would be with 150 million, another option which might be a little bit less expensive, in order to get an idea what is made by the difference of price, what does it mean in coming up with the building? So we think we should not use the upper limit. Maybe there are other options to make it cheaper and that should also be discussed whether this is a way ahead.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that input.

And Iran.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you.

As you will establish an ad hoc group, there is no need to say we will attend or not attend. It's open to everybody. But the importance is that you have a clear mandate for this ad hoc group, what it has to do. Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran. I think that the colleague from the UK, and others have articulated it very well, it's that we know very well that a decision needs to be taken in a timely way. We know that there are great issues with the Varembé building and with the whole envelope of the ITU buildings. But members here feel that they didn't have enough information or sufficient information to comfortably come to a decision on the options at this meeting. So this would be to find a way forward for us to be able to make that decision and what we would need to make that decision in a timely way. So, basically, that would be what I'd be looking for the ad hoc group to achieve.

And as Iran said, yes, everybody would be welcome. And that the time and the place would be posted on the boards downstairs.

Now, we have one additional item on our agenda, and that is the question of the reserve account. And we have a number of contributions from the Russian Federation on the issue. We have documents 73A1/9, 73A1/10, 73A1/11, 73A1/12. So I would ask the Russian Federation if they could introduce the four documents, please.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, allow me on behalf of the RCC to introduce the document that has just been mentioned. Since it deals with the reserve fund, I may be mistaken if I say that we are all looking for a mechanism aimed at improving the financial stability of the Union and reducing the negative balance or the deficit of the Union.

This imbalance significantly is related to the long-term liabilities for the ASHI fund. As we move to the IPSAS standards, this means that the ITU is required to pay a debt in a systematic way, in a stable way, so that over the 30, 40 years to come to deal with the debit balance.

We have to be clear that there are various possibilities for filling up the ASHI fund, an ASHI that has been set up by the Council of the ITU. Well, one thing is we could take a percentage of the salary mass, which is a broadly used practice, but this would be a source of issues when we're trying to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

This is why we're looking at the research fund as a mechanism for offsetting the ASHI fund. And if we look at the issue more broadly, then the stabilization mechanism of the financial situation of the Union.

So we would really like to have -- I would like to draw your attention to the opinions expressed by other members of the Union and take into account the analysis of the reserve fund from 2008 to 2012. I'd like to give you a few figures. Every year, the amount of the reserve fund changes quite a bit. And at the end of the year, the reserve fund could be about 7.3 percent relative to the beginning of the year, as was the case in 2008. But it could also go far beyond the initial amount, sometimes by a factor of four, which was the case in 2009. So we see that the reserve fund is really something that moves around quite a bit.

Now, during the period we're considering, we see a general trend: The reduction of the reserve fund at the beginning of each year and overall over the study period. Let me give you an example. The first agenda of 2012, the level of the reserve fund was 7.6 percent from the base. Now, we can give you other figures that demonstrate that the reserve fund does change quite a bit. However, one has to say that the amount in the reserve fund has always been during the study higher than 6 percent.

In addition, our analyst has shown that over the study period, 2008-2012, the income has always been a little bit higher than expenditure. And, for example, in 2008, this was 5 percent. And this increase was never lower than 1 percent. Based on that, we drew the conclusion that the reserve account is an instrument for increasing stability and financial stability of the Union should be, while the reserve account itself should be more stable and more predictable.

Now, here comes our proposal, based on all of this. We propose the following: We want a mechanism to fund the reserve fund. Now, we don't want a systematic annual planning -- well, not a residual principle. But we want systematic annual planning and transfer of monies, say, from 1 percent from the budget funds allocated for the activities of each Sector.

Now, the sources of these monies, as is the case now, should be the savings that we get because of the work of the staff of the sectors in implementing the recommendations contained in annex 2 to decision 5.

Now, the final figure of 0.5 to 1 percent is something that should be linked to currency exchange rate differences, to contributions, and to the overall economic outlook which are forecast for a four-year period. At the same time, the amount of the reserve account should not fall below 10 percent of the total ITU budgeted expenses. So not 6, as is the case now, but 10 percent. And here we think that the reserve account could be used to finance long-term liabilities of the Union, but we also think and do not exclude, given the current situation, the possibility of using the reserve account for financing current activities, obviously under -- in extraordinary circumstances.

Now, if we adopt this kind of approach, if we use the reserve account to -- and move to a systematic approach, we think it will be necessary to make the necessary amendments in the financial rules and Regulations of the ITU. And we think that this should be reflected in decision 5, that we are currently going to discuss.

And, finally, a couple of other proposals. Well, actually, I already mentioned one when I talked about the reserve account, which should be used mainly for financing our long-term liabilities, but could also be used in extraordinary circumstances could be used for dealing with current activities.

In addition to that, we think that it's necessary to develop -- and here we ask the Council or rather its Council group on financial issues and human resources to develop a way to develop criteria on the ASHI and internal ITU criterias, but taking into account to use at least in part the amounts in the reserve fund, given the IPSAS standards and recommendation 25.

We think this would be useful. We would ask delegates to consider these proposals. Obviously we will be ready to take any questions and we are ready to hear any comments or issues you may have relative to our proposals.

Many thanks.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Russian Federation.

I'll now open the floor for any comments.

Canada, please.

>> CANADA: Yes, thank you, Chairman.

Chairman, we think the presentation by the Russian Federation was very interesting. We do believe that are there very innovative proposals that are being suggested. As the representative from the Russian Federation has noted, some of these issues fall within the purview of the Council Working Group on financial and human resources, and I would encourage the Russian Federation to present these proposals as early as possible in the new year so that they can be considered at the first meeting of this group, which will deal with a large variety of issues, including the impact of decisions that were taken at this Plenipotentiary Conference.

Chairman, with respect to the proposal to increase the amount of the minimum level of the reserve account from 6 percent to 10 percent, this is an issue that was discussed at Council group during the last period. And certainly it presents some interesting propositions that could be further considered. If a decision is not taken here on that particular percentage, certainly this would also be an issue that could be raised and discussed in the context of the Council Working Group and of course the Council itself.

So we very much welcome this contribution from the Russian Federation and we do believe that there are some interesting proposals that should be considered further.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Canada.

UK, please -- sorry. U.S. Please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Actually, my comments are very similar to Canada's. As you know, the U.S. And a number of other countries made a contribution at the May session of Council when we talked about the impact of the unfunded liabilities, and we presented a paper that included a number of options for consideration by the Secretariat.

So at this point we would just encourage the Secretariat to continue the work on the report that we are hoping to receive at the next session of Council, which would hopefully include some ideas for a mechanism to start addressing the ASHI liability and the 30- to 40-year plan.

In terms of increasing the minimum level of the reserve account, we note that the minimum level was increased from 3 percent to 6 percent at the last Plenipotentiary Conference. A level of 6 percent is a common level in the UN system. And we do not believe there is any need to increase it further. But of course we would be more than happy to discuss it further at future meetings of the Council Working Group.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, U.S.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair.

All our thanks go out to the Russian Federation for this very interesting document. It contains a great deal of information.

Now, we would like to know, since we're talking about a Working Group of the Council, if we need to give this document or refer this document directly to the Working Group without sending it to Council in 2015. That's one thing.

The second question is this. We would really like the opinion of the Secretariat on the impact of some of the proposals contained in the document. Namely, the financial impact. We're talk about the ASHI. In Council 2014 we received a lot of information about the health insurance scheme. So here we would like to hear from the Secretariat on this issue and some of the other issues contained in the document.

Now, to conclude, we think that if the Russian Federation agrees, why not include this item on the next agenda of the Council? It seems to be the best avenue to move forward with this document, especially given that likely many other elements have to be taken into account.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mali.

Czech Republic, please.

>> CZECH REPUBLIC: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

We simply want to join our previous speakers, thanking the Russian Federation for this proposal. And taking account of the comments made by previous speakers, we also join.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Czech Republic.

Spain, please.

>> SPAIN: Thank you, Chair.

I'd like firstly to thank the Russian Federation for this proposal and explanations. The transition to IPSAS accounting has taught us all a bit more about accounting, and it's provided us with what I think is a very interesting indicator besides the reserve account, which is the net holdings of the organization. The Russian proposal of increasing from 6 to 10 percent warrants more detail than our system, perhaps from the Working Group. But if that increase goes to financing the medical insurance, well, I think that could be very useful indeed, the ASHI.

In the Working Group, it might also be worth considering another matter. Since IPSAS accounting gives us this useful additional indicator, it might be useful to think not only about limits on the reserve account funds, but also to discuss whether this organization could furnish itself with an indicator. I don't want to be too restrictive in my terminology here concerning overall holdings. This wouldn't only refer to the short-term financial situation of the Union but rather it would give us a medium- and long-term perspective. This isn't something that we always have in International organizations, and I think it might be very useful.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Spain.

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. Just with respect to the question raised by our distinguished colleague from Mali to send the document to the Council Working Group or to the Council, I don't think any of them is practicable. I don't think that the Plenipot is in the position to send the document to Council or send the document to the Council Working Group. You should have something in the minutes of the meeting or report to the plenary, and the Government or the membership States are free to submit any document directly to the Council or to the Council Working Group. But I don't think that the Plenipot should be used for this purpose.

I am not discussing on this particular case, but we don't want the Plenipot to act as a post office to any Council Working Group or to the Council itself or any other organization.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran.

Switzerland.

>> SWITZERLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. We also thank the Russian Federation for this very interesting proposal, which has to do about reimbursement of ASHI.

Having said that, like Spain, we don't think that this is the best of all instruments. It's worthwhile noting that a reserve fund is made up of the profits the ITU might make. So the ITU in a sense would be able to generate additional profits to fill this fund, this reserve fund. So if something has to be reimbursed, the reimbursement has to take place earlier, as the ITU has earlier proposed through very clear measures which are part of the financial planning of the ITU and also the budgetary process.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Switzerland.

Now I'll ask Mr. Ba to respond to -- both to the questions that were raised about the implications of some of the elements of the Russian Federation's proposals, as well as that question of process. And what is appropriate to be dealt with here and what is more appropriate to be dealt with by the Council or the Council Working Group on financial and human resources.

Mr. Ba, please.

>> SECRETARY OF THE SESSION: Thank you. First and foremost, the Secretariat would like to thank the Russian Federation for its innovative proposals, as contained in the document on ways to modify the reserve account. I would like to remind you that the reserve account is regulated by the financial rules and regulations of the Union.

So now looking at Mali's question, what is the right avenue for this change? Well, first and foremost it is really the Council group responsible for financial and human resources issues. They are really responsible for looking at modifications to the financial rules and regulations of the Union. Then the Working Group makes a report to the Council. That's how things work in terms of procedure, when one modifies the financial rules and regulations.

Now, looking at another aspect, increasing the reserve fund to 10 percent, yesterday as you were well aware we got some new information on contribution units. And in light of that, increasing the reserve fund to 10 percent would put the Union in a difficult position. We need much greater flexibility. Well, let me say the management team needs more flexibility to manage the Union. You know that 80 percent of our budget, I think you've heard this figure before, in budgetary presentations, 80 percent is staff pay for civil servants. You know that all of the proposals on the table for a number of years, all staff has been budgeted for about 95 percent. There is a leeway of 5 percent. And the management team is working closely to try to apply efficiency measures to ensure that the budgets are not exceeded.

As you also know during the 2013 Council meeting, we created a new fund, the fund for clearing up the end of the ASHI fund, and the Council wanted to add 4 million to this. At the outset, that was part of the 2014, 2015 budget. And also this year, when the 2013 financial period was over and we had a surplus, one of the measures that the Secretary-General came up with to clear up the ASHI, he found two million additional francs, in addition to the 4 million offered by the Council. So now we have 6 million in the ASHI fund.

As you are well aware, the Secretary-General also took the decision to leave the ITU ILO health insurance scheme where we constantly had a deficit. So since May 1, 2014, ITU has a new private insurance company. And we put in place, in addition to other measures to clean up insurance issues, a deductible amount for all of our staff, including our retirees. Now, we know that our budget covers two-thirds of the costs of retirees and 50 percent of the health cost for staff members. The ITU is working very closely with our insurance company, especially given the concerns we have. So we're doing everything possible to fix the problem with ASHI.

You know that the retiree population is greater than the population of staff, and this creates additional health costs. And we know that health costs are relatively high in Geneva and its region, and this especially given the case that many of our retirees are working in the German part of Switzerland, the costs are even higher.

Now, what the Russian Federation is proposing leads us to believe that the best thing is to turn these questions over to the Council Working Group on finance and human resources at its next meeting sometime in December.

Now, as for the Secretariat, the 6 percent threshold seems to be the right level. Increasing it to 10 percent we believe might give rise to some difficulties and reduce the flexibility of the new management team at the ITU. The secretary's more in favor of maintaining the current 6 percent level, keeping in mind that every time we make savings at the end of the year, these savings are allocated in terms of -- well, actually, a percentage is determined, and we decide how much would go to ASHI. And obviously this means they are made available to ASHI and other accounts, and this was the case at the end of 2013 and that financial exercise.

Now, as to the impact of these proposals, the clean-up fund started with 300 million and now we have a net balance of 196 million. About.

So right now the ITU has to pay 196 million. Now, we have just -- we are just about to celebrate the 150 anniversary of the ITU, and I don't think that given this conference -- well, I don't think -- the ITU is not going to stop its activities in the next few years. And what I meant was that these 196 million francs would have to be paid immediately if the ITU is going to stop its activities say at the end of the year.

I mean, all the budgetary allocations every year, there is an allocation to health and insurance. Every year we present a budget. Every four years we present a four-year budget plan. And right now under this plan the contribution to health insurance is between 5 and 6 percent.

Now, the virtual liabilities is taken into consideration in the activities of the Council and its Working Groups.

Thank you, Madam. These are some of the explanations that I wanted to provide you with.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba.

So the proposals have raised a number of -- Russian Federation.

So the proposals have raised a number of -- Russian Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you.

On behalf of the RCC, the Russian Federation would like to thank all the colleagues who have been involved in these discussions, which have shown us we need to look at another level. This discussion is very important. We are talking really about the financial stability of the ITU for the long run. Now, I agree that we have to provide the management team with flexibility. But sometimes -- but something is better than flexibility and that is clear cut rules.

I have to say this, that when we were making our proposal, we didn't think that there would be so many difficulties. Well, and I'm referring to we didn't think there would be any issues with reduction of contribution units.

Our proposals can be raised and discussed in plenaries. So I'm grateful for the proposal to continue discussions on these ideas and other ideas that other countries may come up with. And this discussion will obviously continue first and foremost at Council Working Group and then on to Council.

Having said that, we want our proposals to be part of the summary report of this meeting of Committee 6.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you again, Russian Federation. There is a lot of appreciation for the work that you've done in preparing the four proposals, and certainly we will include them in the report of the meeting. And I think there is a lot of encouragement to present them again to the Council Working Group on financial and human resources at its first meeting I think in February next year.

So thank you again.

Now in the coffee break our colleague from Brazil, Mr. Canazza, was very busy with colleagues in trying to come to a conclusion on Resolution 25. So I'll just ask him if he would provide with us a report on how that went.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We had a meeting in the coffee break with all interested parties, and specifically on the proposal of the UAE that was proposed to change the DT that we had already prepared. This DT has been available since the 23rd of October, for five days now, so I'm not going to go into the details of this. I'm just going through the changes that we agreed on the coffee break.

So, basically, we are changing the "Resolves." "Resolves 5," it would read that "the regional and area offices should contribute inter alia to the annual four-year rolling operational plans of the General Secretariat and of the three sectors." And this is proposed with the notion that we are now in the new ITU wide Strategic Plan, so the regional offices are required in several points of this new Resolution to actively engage in the implementation of the whole Strategic Plans and the whole four strategic goals that we are setting in the Strategic Plan.

So with this in mind, it makes sense that the regional offices contribute actively to the deliberation of the operational plans of the three sectors and the General-Secretariat.

And with this in mind, we have changes to "Resolves" 13, on page 7 of the proposal. And it would read, in the beginning, "that the objectives and outcomes identified in the Strategic Plan for the Union for 2016-2019, along with the four-year rolling operational plans of the General-Secretariat, and of the three sectors." So the reasoning is the same here.

There is a change to the "Instructs the Council," number 4. And the change is "That Council should analyze the performance of regional and area offices based on the report of the Secretary-General, the Strategic Plan for the Union for 2016 to 2019, the four-year rolling operational plans of the General Secretariat and of the three Sectors." This is the same rationale that I've just explained.

And in the "Instructs the Secretary-General" 4 part, the Secretary-General, in his report to Council, would "submit each year to Council a report on the regional presence containing, for each specific regional office, detailed information on how the goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan for 2016 to 2019 and the four-year rolling operational plans of the General-Secretariat and of the three sectors."

So the reporting would contain all the activities in the three sectors and the General-Secretariat performed by the regional offices.

So I'll put forward for your consideration.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Canazza. Your work is appreciated, as is the other members of that small group.

The Secretariat will post this as a DT/rev 1. I think that if we don't have any comments we can then send it directly to the Editorial Committee. And if they have comments they can deal with them in Com 6.

So with that, we have concluded our work for this afternoon. I thank you very much for your participation and engagement, and we will see you again -- Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. And thanks to the delegate of Brazil for the suggestions.

I think there are some -- there needs to be some qualifying in the sentences that were read, the regional offices contribute. Perhaps we should add between the two commas, "to the extent possible" or "to the extent practicable." There are some areas that are difficult to contribute to the operational plan of the -- some sectors. So we should put this qualifier to leave this also with the flexibility that they have to do. Otherwise, it may not be quite implementable.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran.

Australia, please.

>> AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair. This was a separate issue. I just want to draw the attention of the room to the drafting group on the IMAC Resolution, Resolution 162, which will be held at 5:30 in room M. I just wanted to draw this to your attention, because it's not on the daily schedule.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you Australia.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam. This is also another matter.

If we have time, it might be useful to have a summary of what's happened in the session, so that it's clear for our minutes and for our future work. This happened in the Working Group of the plenary. That would be useful, if it's possible, particularly with so many decisions taken.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mali. Yes, we will be able to do that.

Now, this afternoon we have discussed the proposed revision to Resolution 144 and the U.S. has been leading the discussion on that. There's still a little bit of work to do on finalizing that, so we will be able to look at that for decision hopefully tomorrow.

The proposed revision to Resolution 25 was the DT15 document that Mr. Canazza was just giving us an update on, as our last piece of business for the afternoon. They have formed a small group here in the coffee break and they have been able to come together and reach agreement on a number of small edits to that, which we will publish as a DT rev 1. If we have no comments on that, and we had a comment from Iran, we will send that straight to Committee -- the Editorial Committee. When we do have comments, and we did have one from Iran as I just said, then we will be able to have further discussion on that before we can finalize.

The proposed revision to decision 12 and the proposed revision to Resolution 11, we have endorsed and they have been or will be sent to the editorial committee.

Now, the proposed revision to Resolution 157 has also been endorsed and sent to the editorial committee.

The request for exemption from any financial contribution to defraying expenses relating to participation in the work of the ITU, that was document PP14/61, we have agreed some changes after discussions with Iran and with Sweden, and I will be sending a note to the Chairman of Committee 5, because that is where the document is going to be considered.

For the options for the Union's headquarter premises over the long-term, and that is PP14/57, we have formed an ad hoc group that will be Chaired by Spain, and that would be looking at mechanisms and processes for this to be further considered, given that the membership here felt that they would not be able to come to a conclusion on this matter at this PP14, that there would need to be further work. So this would be looking at the path forward for how that would be done, taking into account that there are time imperatives, but also the need to have sufficient information for members to feel that they are able to make a proper decision on this matter.

On the question of the reserve account, the documents from the RCC will be summarized in the report of this Committee, and we have recommended that the Russian Federation provide them as contributions to the first meeting of the Council Working Group on financial and human resources, which will be meeting in February 2015.

Iran, please.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. On your last point, I don't think that we could recommend to any Government, only if we invite them, if they so wish. So it's not up to us to recommend anything. That is going beyond our mandates.

There was some other document on your agenda which Iran is responsible on behalf of APT, I don't know when you will discuss that, if this is a good, if you kindly indicate that agenda item 150 and 11 relating to the decision 5 and annexes to the decision 5, when they will be discussed, because we are limited in number and we have to know when that will be discussed, from the APT.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Iran. As was said earlier in the meeting, the Secretariat still needs to prepare a revised financial plan, and those issues in the agenda items you mentioned are connected with that financial plan. And also, Dr. Toure would like to be with us for that consideration, and that won't be able to happen until tomorrow afternoon. So just to clarify the timing for that.

Argentina, please.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you. I'm taking the floor to thank you for that summary. I hope that will also apply for the rest of our work, for the rest of the work of Committee 6. So thank you very much, indeed, for that summary.

>> CHAIRMAN: And thank you, Mali. That was a very good suggestion. So good afternoon. I wish you well in all of your work this afternoon and this evening. And we will see you again tomorrow afternoon.

Thank you all.

(End of session, 17:20)

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