**WCIT Media Briefing**

**ITU Headquarters, 22 June 2012, 18:00 CET**

**Moderator:** Paul Conneally, Head, ITU Communication and Partnership Promotion

**Presenters:** Dr. Hamadoun Touré, ITU Secretary-General

Malcolm Johnson, Director, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

Richard Hill, Secretary, Council Working Group-WCIT

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**Paul Conneally**

Good afternoon and good evening. I believe we have a number of journalists online – greetings from the ITU in Geneva.

My name is **Paul Conneally**. I’m the Head of Communications for ITU. And I’m here in the presence of the Secretary-General of the ITU, **Dr Hamadoun Touré**; and **Mr Malcolm Johnson**, the Director of the TSB, the Standardization Bureau, who will be leading on the WCIT conference for ITU; as well as **Mr Richard Hill**, who is facilitating the whole WCIT process for ITU.

What we’re planning to do is to have a briefing, which we believe will last no more than 30 minutes from our side, which will start off with a presentation from the Secretary-General, followed by some remarks from **Mr Malcolm Johnson** on the latest developments following the conclusion today of the final preparatory meeting of the Council Working Group. We’ll then have a short PowerPoint presentation, from **Richard Hill**. And then we’ll be open to your questions.

Just one note: the Secretary-General will have to leave at 7pm – our time – so in one hour’s time. **Mr Johnson** will be the principle person on the podium, and we have a number of colleagues here gathering questions. We’ll do our best to facilitate them this evening. And certainly we’ll be able to follow up afterwards as well. So without further ado, I’d like to hand over to Secretary-General, please.

**Dr Hamadoun Touré**

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be able to join you today right after the final meeting here in Geneva of the Council Working Group on WCIT, which has led the preparatory process for this landmark conference, and which concluded its work about 2 hours ago.

As Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, I welcome this opportunity to set the record straight on a number of important issues which have found their way into various realms of the public domain over the past few months, and which have not – on the whole – been helpful in terms of clarifying the plain facts and the potential benefits we can hope to achieve through the WCIT event.

Firstly, contrary to some comments, WCIT will be the catalyst for the free flow of information.

Let me point out that in Article 33 of the ITU’s Constitution, Member States recognize the right of the public to correspond by means of the international service of public correspondence. In layman’s terms, that means using public network infrastructure to communicate.

And the ITRs can only go along with that provision.

It is true, nonetheless, that all countries impose some restrictions –to protect copyright owners, for example, and to prevent defamation.

Some countries go further and restrict the use of telecommunications in areas such as pornography, gambling, hate speech, negation of genocide, and even certain types of political speech.

Such restrictions are permitted by Article 34 of the ITU’s Constitution, which provides that Member States reserve the right to cut off, in accordance with their national law, any private telecommunications which may appear dangerous to the security of the State, or contrary to its laws, to public order or to decency.

And the ITRs cannot contradict that provision, either.

WCIT, therefore, will facilitate the free flow of information.

There have been also a number of accounts stating that there is some sort of barrier, conflict or even war between telecommunications and the Internet.

In the converged world of the 21st century, this is plainly ridiculous. Who today can tell me the difference, in terms of traffic passing across networks, between voice, video, and data?

The real issue is how best to cooperate – to ensure:

* The free flow of information;
* The continued development of broadband;
* Continuing investment in networks, services and applications;
* And perhaps most importantly – in this very fast-moving world – continuing innovation.

I cannot imagine anyone who would disagree that the benefits of ICTs should be brought to all citizens of the world.

But to do that, we will have to work together.

So the question before WCIT is, therefore, how best can the ITRs be adapted to facilitate the achievement of that goal.

Let me state that there seems to be considerable support among ITU members for including high-level, technology-neutral, principles in the ITRs.

And of course those principles should have a positive impact on the Internet also – because they should favour its further growth.

As we all know, not only were the 1988 ITRs instrumental in enabling the global deployment of the Internet, but many other ITU activities have been, and will continue to be, essential components of Internet growth.

Let me mention just a handful:

* Standards for end-user access equipment such as modems, including xDSL and cable modems;
* Compression standards;
* Security standards, including standards to combat spam;
* Standards for backbone networks, including fibre optics;
* And, of course, the radio frequencies used to implement WiFi – which you are no doubt using just now as I speak.

International policy and economic issues related to telecommunications have always been discussed and agreed under the auspices of ITU, to the benefit of all the world’s users – and there is no reason to think that WCIT will be an exception.

This conference comes at a time when the ICT sector is having a major impact on global social and economic development, so this represents a great opportunity to amend the treaty in a way that will further extend the benefits of ICTs to all the world’s people.

As the industry has pointed out, data volumes are increasing much faster than the infrastructure needed to carry them, and there is currently a risk of an infrastructure investment shortfall.

The revised ITRs should therefore help to encourage broadband roll-out and investment. They should emphasize the importance of liberalization and privatization, and should recognize the role of the private sector and market-based solutions.

At the same time as data volumes are increasing, unit prices are declining, so total revenues for telecommunications operators are potentially at risk. As a result, some have said that there is a need to address the current disconnect between sources of revenue and sources of costs, and to decide upon the most appropriate way to do so.

The current international regulatory framework is simply not equipped to deal with these challenges – challenges which will affect the development of a fully-inclusive information society over the next decade; a society that ensures that all the world's citizens have equitable, affordable and secure access to voice, video and data.

There are also some people who think that WCIT should not address costs.

But we all know that the cost of Internet connectivity is too high in most developing countries. And we all know that many consumers think international mobile roaming prices are too high. These are facts.

We all want to see greater Internet usage in developing countries. And I presume that we all want consumers to feel that they are getting good value for money when they roam.

So it would seem fully appropriate to discuss these matters in Dubai – so that we can find ways to bring down the cost of Internet connectivity in developing countries, while ensuring sufficient revenues for operators to deploy broadband infrastructure. And so that we can find ways to ensure that both customers and operators feel that roaming prices are fair and reasonable.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It has come as a surprise – and I have to say a great disappointment – to see that some of those who have had access to WCIT proposals have chosen to publicly mis-state or distort them in public forums and to journalists, sometimes to the point of caricature.

These distortions and mis-statements could be found plausible by credulous members of the public, and could even be used to influence national parliaments, given that the documents themselves are not officially available – in spite of recent developments, including the leaking of Document TD 64.

I can confirm that a group of civil society organizations has written to me to request public access to the proposals under discussion, and that I will be putting this proposal to the forthcoming session of ITU Council with a view to advocating open access to these documents, and in particular future versions of TD 64.

Council is ITU’s governing body, comprised of an elected subset of 48 Member States, which meets annually in between 4-yearly Plenipotentiary Conferences.

I will also be recommending to Council that it agree to hold an open consultation regarding the ITRs, accessible to all stakeholders worldwide.

Let me be clear however that it is Council that will take the final decision on these matters, and not the ITU Secretariat.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am proud of the ITU’s tradition of open discussion amongst its membership, and I am proud that the ITU works bottom-up, thanks to inputs from its 193 Member States, over 552 Sector Members, over 100 Associates and over 40 academic members.

I am pleased to see that our membership has submitted over 120 input documents to the Council Working Group on WCIT. All of our Member States and Sector Members have access to these documents – and in keeping with ITU’s working methods all members have had an opportunity to comment on them, in particular at the regional preparatory meetings.

In accordance with national laws and practices, some countries will no doubt be conducting public consultations on WCIT, and some of those consultations will be based on the report of this Working Group. Indeed I note that the Netherlands has already informed the Council Working Group on WCIT of such a national consultation, and I commended them for that. I encourage more of this kind of action as we move forward, both in the interests of transparency and of accountability.

With all this activity, we can expect significant additional inputs to the conference, and I am confident that these will help us to understand how to iron out any differences in views, so as to achieve consensus in Dubai, in the true tradition of the ITU.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Most of us were not involved in the preparations for the 1988 conference in Melbourne. But the historical record shows that many of the fears, concerns, and criticisms surrounding WCIT also appeared then in 1988.

As we know, those fears and concerns were unwarranted: the 1988 Melbourne conference created the framework that enabled the spectacular growth of telecommunications – including the Internet – over the past 24 years.

1988 set the stage for the information society. And 2012 will set the stage for the knowledge society.

Many constructive proposals for revising the ITRs have already been presented. I have actively encouraged ITU members who do not agree with some of the proposals to submit alternatives, and to engage in constructive discussions with all parties.

WCIT is an opportunity to create a stable international regulatory framework providing the right conditions to allow markets to flourish globally – and the issues on the table are vital to the creation of a fully-inclusive Information Society – or I should say – knowledge society.

We all know that, in the true tradition of the ITU, we will not vote on any issues – just like in January, at the World Radiocommunication Conference, where in four weeks we did not vote once, but came to consensus on every issue.

Today’s Working Group on WCIT has also concluded on a very positive note, with all our members’ agreement. I will let **Malcolm** give you more details on that. ITU members all want the same thing: further development of telecommunications.

By working together, we know we can make this world a better place.

A world where everyone has equitable, affordable and secure access to broadband, that includes voice, video, data and Internet – wherever they live and whatever their circumstances.

And a world where the social and economic benefits of ICTs have reached all the peoples of the planet.

And a world where social and economic justice prevails.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is my statement for this session. And I look forward to responding to some of your questions.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Secretary-General. I’d like to now please pass the microphone to Director of the Standardization Bureau, Mr Malcolm Johnson, who will update us on the current situation. Thank you very much.

**Malcolm Johnson**

Thanks very much. As the Secretary-General mentioned, the group that is preparing for the conference had its 8th and final meeting today. And it concluded its work very successfully. Countries from all the regions of the world expressed their satisfaction with the work of the group, and left Geneva very happy with the outcome of the group, which is a document which includes a composition of all the proposals that have been made for a new treaty. And this covers a number of issues, such as international roaming, security, combating spam, the misuse of the telephone numbering system. And in addition to new issues which came into the final meeting, such as combating climate change through encouraging more energy-efficient standards, to also combat e-waste, and also ensure that telecommunication services are accessible – in other words, are accessible to persons with disabilities.

And this document now will be made available to the ITU membership, and will provide them with the basis for making their proposals to the conference in Dubai at the end of the year. There has been a whole series of regional preparatory meetings around the world, which the ITU Secretariat has been facilitating. And they will be continued. Each region will have a further meeting to finalize the proposals to the conference, so that there will be common proposals to the conference from each of the ITU’s six regions around the world. And this will greatly facilitate the work of the conference coming together on a consensus for a new international treaty. So I hope that will give a good message for the future preparations for this conference.

And I also remain happy to answer any questions. Thank you very much Paul.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Malcolm. And now I’d like hand over to Richard Hill who will give us a short PowerPoint presentation, which will also forward to everybody who’s online, about the WCIT process. So without further ado, over to Richard. Thank you very much.

**Richard Hill**

Thank you very much Paul. I will run through this fairly quickly, so that you have more time for questions. It’s on the web and of course you may ask questions about this presentation itself – if I go too fast.

So this is the outline of the presentation. And this gives the background. This Treaty is the cornerstone of telecommunications in one way or another. It goes back to 1865 when the ITU was founded to facilitate international telegraphy. And it’s been updated over the years, as you can see. The last version was done in 1988. The ‘88 version was a significant departure from previous practice because previously they had had telegraph regulations, and the telephone regulations. Those were last modified in 1973. And in 1988, they combined them into a single document called the International Telecommunication Regulations, which was, in effect, technology-neutral because it did not address specifically either telegraphy or telephone. It covered all forms of telecommunications. And then we have the Radio Regulations – which are updated regularly about every 4 years, and which govern the use of radio frequencies around the world. There are two other treaties at the ITU – the Constitution and Convention.

The ITRs are signed by 178 countries, and it’s really the only truly global treaty right around the world relating to telecommunications. But why are these regulations important? Because they establish general principles regarding international telecommunications, and they facilitate interconnection and interoperability around the world, they underpin the harmonious development and efficient operation of technical facilities, and they promote efficiency, usefulness and availability.

Now these aren’t just words. Think about your own experience, as you travel around today, you probably have more trouble plugging in your computer to the power outlet than you do actually connecting to the Internet, because telecommunications is far more harmonized and standardized and interoperable than the 220 volt system. And that’s true also for your mobile phone, which works seamlessly around the world. Why is that? Well, because we have a set of standards, and because we have a set of agreements. But more importantly, because we do have these general principles that all countries agree on, which is to try to make all the stuff work around the world seamlessly.

There is now general agreement that you do need treaty-level provisions. There wasn’t always – discussions took a while. There were some people who thought that we don’t actually need a treaty, we can do everything through what we call “Recommendations”. But I think everybody now agrees that we do need some treaty-level provisions – we don’t yet have full consensus on exactly what should be in there, but there is agreement that we need to revise the ITRs.

And now we can go to the next slide. We need to revise them because in 1988, liberalization and privatization were just starting. It had been happening in the US and couple of other countries before then. But in most of the world, we still had monopoly operators, which were government-controlled or government-owned. And in fact, the ITRs have been a significant instrument in liberalization. Article 9 of the ITRs is widely considered to be the provision that allowed the private use of fixed lines, and therefore, the development of the Internet.

Under the previous treaties, the Telephone Regulations and the Telegraph Regulations, it would have been very difficult – in fact, impossible – to see the development of telecommunications that we’ve seen since 1988. But things have been changed. Everything now is liberalized, and there’re not that many monopoly operators anymore; also privatized. And as the Secretary-General said, we’re seeing the convergence of voice, and data, and video, and we have a lot more mobile telephony than we did back then. And so the treaty provisions are considered not quite up-to-date and need to be modernized.

Now we can go to the next slide.

In particular, as we all know, the TCP-IP infrastructure is largely used for everything today, including the transmission of voice – not just Voice over IP, but even conventional voice is often packetized and transmitted over IP networks. And we see a shift from fixed to mobile We see a little graph here that shows the shift from fixed to mobile, and the shift from voice to data. So these are the new drivers of telecommunications revenue and also traffic, and we need adapt to that. This is a major instrument. As you know, telecommunications account for something like 3% of GDP worldwide, and a much higher percentage of that in developing countries – in some developing countries, it can be 10-15% of GDP. So it’s important to get this right, as the Secretary-General said. Therefore, we’re wanted to have a very thorough preparatory process.

And as we said before, we’ve had 8 meetings of a group, over a 2-year period to prepare this. And in addition, we’ve had regional meetings all around the world, and we’ll have another round of regional meetings. We’ve had 124 input documents submitted by the membership. You may have heard some discussion about what’s bottom-up and what’s top-down. I personally don’t know what could be more bottom-up than to get 124 documents from the membership, telling us how to do things. And these are not 1-page documents, some of these documents are 20-30 pages long. So there’s been very very significant input from our membership in this process.

And what are the key proposals? We can summarize them in broad categories that we see on this slide. I won’t go into these in any detail now, we can perhaps come back to that, because I’d rather focus on the more specific proposals than these general categories. And we’ve also posted now background documents on each of these topics, which are available on our website.

So can we go to the next slide?

The key issues are what are the core principles? Should some things stay in the ITRs, or go somewhere else? And what should we do about the new issues? Let’s take a look at some of the key proposals. Some of them we’ve already mentioned. And I don’t have here on the slide the ones that just came in and passed a couple of days ago – Malcolm mentioned energy-efficiency and accessibility. But we do have roaming that is in there; misuse of numbering resources; consumer fraud –(I hope that hasn’t happened to you, but it’s the kind of phishing attack that you get on your phone when somebody calls you and you call them back, and then you discover that it was a very high-cost number and you’ve lost a lot of money); trying to avoid double taxation, and basically reduce the tax burden for telecommunications; transparency of routing, so that people know how their traffic is being moved around the world; there’s some general principles on economic issues, (I’ll show you in a moment); and the issue of differentiated traffic management (as I’m sure you’ve heard ETNO, the European operators, have some ideas on that); and improving cooperation on cybersecurity and combatting spam.

Now the key point as mentioned here at the bottom, is that there have been some mentions that somehow the ITU would get some overall worldwide regulatory authority. There’re no proposals along those lines; the proposals are that the individual countries and individual Member States should take action in these particular areas. So for example, on mobile roaming, it’s not being proposed that somebody in Geneva would look at the cost of mobile roaming in some country and say “oh that’s too high, we’ll price it down”. The proposal is that national authorities in those countries should take a look at the mobile roaming rates and make sure that they’re reasonable.

So, in particular, the first proposal we’ll look at is mobile roaming. That comes in two flavours; one flavour is less controversial than the other. The one that is less controversial is transparency of prices for users. You may have heard that the GSMA(the GSM Association) has just announced an initiative along those lines. The second one is obviously a bit more delicate, and that is saying what should the price levels be. There’ve been various proposals of prices based on cost – either prices based on the local costs of the country to which you roam, or prices based on the country in which you are based, i.e. your normal prices.

There is an ITU-T Recommendation on this topic (D-98), and there are OECD Recommendations, but the proposals are really to put this into a treaty, because that has a somewhat different effect than just having recommendations. Then there’re proposals to prevent the misuse and hijacking of numbering resources. According to the industry, numbering misuse is a key factor in fraud against most of the operators, who lose large amounts of money, and customers who may lose not that much, but still it’s annoying. And this creates artificial inflation of traffic. And it’s part of combatting fraud, asI mentioned, you might wish to have transmission of calling party identification.

Now I should’ve mentioned that none of these proposals, nor the previous ones on roaming, are agreed at this stage. There’s simply an intent to work on this and see if we can reach an agreement. As the Secretary-General said, we have long tradition of reaching agreement at ITU, so we’re very confident about this.

Then there were proposals to prevent the double taxation, or in fact, to try to discourage excessive taxation. Telecommunications ultimately encourage lower taxes. Now as you know, it’s a delicate issue, none of us likes to pay taxes – at least I don’t like to pay taxes. On the other hand, they are necessary for governments to build roads and to fund education and so forth. So there’s a balance here between the taxation on telecoms to raise revenue, but on the other hand, not discourage – or in fact rather encourage – telecommunications, which, as you know, has a positive effect on GDP.

Then there are some proposals on general principles, not just roaming but in general. Transparency of prices, cost orientation (cost presumably would be understood to include the return on investment, taxes, creation of reserves for future investment, risk premiums, etc. in addition, of course, to the normal operating cost). Again, none of this is agreed.

Then the general principles. We wish, as the SecretaryGeneral said, to foster continued investment in high-bandwidth infrastructure. To do that, we need an adequate return on investment. And as some people have proposed, compensation for traffic carried and compensation for traffic terminated. Those proposals, as I’m sure you know, are rather delicate and have raised significant discussion.

As I said before, there’re no proposals to create a new international regulatory agency. The proposals are that the national authorities should implement the agreed positions. And that, as you know, is a rather complicated process. First we have to agree the treaty in Dubai; then it has to be ratified according to your national procedures; and then transposed into national laws and regulations. And in some cases, for example if we go to cost orientation, you probably need some new ITU-T Recommendations or to revise them.

So what are our expectations for WCIT? I think really the Secretary-General said it more eloquently than I could. But you see them summarized here on the slides, which, again, you will have available online.

Here are some links that could be useful to you. And that concludes my presentation. Thank you very much.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Richard. We have a number of questions coming in online or via emails. So I’ll start straight away with the first question, which is to the Secretary-General:

* *In your view, Secretary-General, what would the preferred outcomes of the WCIT conference be?*

**Dr Hamadoun Touré**

Thanks. That is a very good question of course. Before I answer the question, I would just like to how you here thelast ITRs that we are talking about. This is a 99-page document that is half A4 size. And the first a few pages are a list of the people who ratified this convention. Therefore, it is a very light document. And I expect the current ITRs to come up with a document that will be addressing very light-touch regulatory issues – and I repeat, light-touch regulatory issues – that will encourage competition, liberalization; that will encourage innovation; that will bring down cost; and that will address security issues as an international framework of collaboration, so to guarantee freedom and privacy.

I would like this document to address the world where we are in today, which is a converged world of voice, video and data. And this, of course, has already been taken into account. You know we’re in a world where you cannot operate a television set without the telecommunication standards and spectrum; and you will not be able to communicate worldwide without satellites that are coordinated by ITU. And also, the GPS system and all other telecommunications wouldn’t have happened without the work that has been done in ITU today.

I would like us to address the issues of interconnection and taxation. Like Richard Hill has mentioned here, we would like to see as low as possible taxes, in order for this business to continue to flourish, and also for this business to be used as a tool for all the other sectors to flourish as well. This can be done only in a secure and accessible communication mode. And therefore, it is essential that we address this. I believe, overall, this will address the fundamental right to communicate – as said in the preamble of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) – the right to access information, to use information, to create information and share information in a secure and affordable manner.

This is the overall purpose of the World Conference on International Telecommunications. And we hope that the Dubai conference will set the stage, as I said, for the knowledge society that we’re walking toward.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Secretary-General. That question, I should have mentioned, came from ***Stephen McClelland***. Can I see the second question, which I saw there from Iain Thomson? This is from ***Iain Thomson*** from The Register. And also this is for the Secretary-General, but also for any other colleagues who may want to have any additional comments after the Secretary-General’s. And the question is:

* *What is the situation if no agreement is reached at WCIT? Will another one be held? If the treaty is agreed and some, for example, the US refuses to ratify it, does the whole process have to begin again?*

**Dr Hamadoun Touré**

We expect an agreement that will satisfy all our Member States. As I said, we have a very long tradition of cooperation. Again, in January this year, we had the World Radiocommunication Conference, with 193 Member States, over 700 sector members, academia — and you know, all of the participants, over 3,000 delegates, participated in this conference and we were able to find a consensus on all our issues. We’re membership-driven. We want to make sure that no country is put as a minority in a group; we want a “win-win”. So this WCIT conference will come up with solutions that are workable for the whole world.

Telecommunications are a tool that will only work if all parties are in agreement. This is why we have been able to have global standards. When we say that ITU is the oldest organization of the United Nations family, it means we have survived the two World Wars, we’ve survived also the 70-years or so of the Cold War, when all the parties were working together in order to agree on spectrum, to agree on where they are going to locate their satellites so that there’s no interference. And this has worked so far. And I see no reason why the conference in Dubai in December this year would be any different. We have a long tradition of cooperation, of consensus-building. People may have differences but I believe that you can have friction of ideas, and from friction comes light. And I believe that the proposals will come out without one single vote – in the true tradition of ITU. Voting means winners and losers, and this is not simply acceptable. And we believe that we’ll come to an agreement on all of the issues. The issues where we will not come to an agreement, of course will not be incorporated in the agreement, and they will continue to be discussed, of course, for official improvements if that comes.

But I believe the ITRs will set the stage for the next two decades with very high level principles that are acceptable to everybody. I believe no-one would be against the freedom of access to information; no-one would be against communications as a fundamental right; no-one would go against bringing down the cost of communications, and no-one would go against securing our networks and services applications, so as to secure our children, our governments and our companies. And that will safeguard, of course, privacy and the freedom.

Those are the key points that I believe that we can pinpoint in any single document. And I believe those countries that are the highest defenders of freedom and defenders of privacy would like to see all countries committed to the same types of principles. And therefore I have no doubt that WCIT in December will give us that opportunity and that we’ll find points of agreement.

In real life, we have so many things in common where we agree. Of course there’re sometimes little differences, and it’s human that we spend time on those little differences. But I believe in intellectual brainstorming and intellectual debates, we should be able to come to some common ground and, therefore, be able to put together sets of common principles. And why is it important this would set of principles would fit in the light-touch regulatory environment? Because if they’re not light-touch, if they’re not key principles, theyt won’t last too long, it would be absolutely for a very short period of time. Therefore, again, I’m very confident that those who are sceptical, just like those who were sceptical back in 1988, would find at the end of day that there’re a lot of things that are in common in this small world, and that we’ll work together to make it yet a better world.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you Secretary-General. If we don’t have any additional comments from my colleagues, we’ll move on to the next question. And this question may require some input from Richard as well. It comes in 2 parts, and it’s from ***Scott Billquist***. And it is:

* *What are the various documents that will be produced during the meeting? The document from the meeting that has just concluded here in Geneva,where will it be submitted: the ITU Council,WCIT, or somewhere else? This is the first part of the question.*

**Richard Hill**

Thank you for that. One of the links I showed earlier is to the website of the Council WCIT group. The actual list of documents is publically available, even though the content of the documents is not. And you will see a number of output documents. There’s a report to the WCIT, there’s a report to Council, and there’re two documents completing the compilation of proposals. One is a detailed compilation of all the proposals made. And the other one is more of a summary of the main proposals which are expected to be discussed.

The report to Council is simply a report on the activities of the group. And the report to WCIT will contain all of the proposals, those of the detailed compilation and the more succinct compilation of the main proposals. That document will be going to the WCIT directly and will be published on our website shortly.

**Paul Conneally**

The second part of the question, I think maybe also Richard you’ll be able to help with, maybe other colleagues can supplement after that.

* *What was the reaction to the INTUG submission on mobile roaming that is available on the INTUG website, specifically on data roaming? How was it handled for the various Council Working Group’s deliverables?*

**Richard Hill**

Like all other proposals from the membership, it’s been included in the compilations of proposals and will be further discussed.

**Paul Conneally**

This is coming from ***Monika Ermert***:

* *Two proposals have caught the eyes of those concerned about the ITRs’ potential effect – a proposal allowing intervention on routing by governments, and proposals including security issues regarding international naming and numbering. Do these principles still stand? Can you elaborate what they are addressing in detail?*

**Richard Hill**

Yes I’m stumped by those because I don’t see what people are talking about, but people are free to interpret the proposals any way they like. So perhaps people who say that, can produce the proposals. I mean it’s no secret. I’m sure all of you have been looking at various blogs, and there’re some divergent opinions about what these things say. And I urge you to look at the different interpretations and make up your own mind.

**Dr Hamadoun Touré**

Yes I’ll probably just add a few comments on this. You know, this again shows the democratic process here. Everyone can make his input and express it. But the outcome document will be issues that we all agree on. And this really shows the democratic process and I would like to encourage anyone who has an input to send it, or who has a counter-argument against those that are out there, to to present those inputs. The documents that will not have a full consensus agreement by all members will simply not go through. But it is important that people express their ideas, and express the reasons why they’re putting forward those ideas.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Secretary-General. And before you leave us, there’s one question here which we’ve been asked to directly put to you, which maybe could be complemented also by other colleagues. It’s from ***Richard Lardner***, the Associated Press:

* *It says on page 61 of TD64, there’s a proposal from Russia which states “Member States shall ensure unrestricted public access to international telecommunications services, and the unrestricted use of international telecommunications, except in cases where international telecommunications services are used for the purpose of interfering in the internal affairs, or undermining the sovereignty – national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and public safety of other States, or to divulge information of a sensitive nature.” Richard wants to know if this is an active proposal. Member states, including the US, have expressed concerns that inclusion of the language could allow a country to repress the flow of online information. Can you respond to that?*

**Dr Hamadoun Touré**

Yes the proposal, of course, is still alive and is one proposal among many others. And I believe that in the discussions with the United States and other countries, we’ll be able to find the right language that will take into account the right concerns from Member States without infringing the privacy or the freedom of citizens. There’re some genuine national security concerns in all countries, including the US and Russia. And those need to be taken into account. And I believe that there are international agreements that have addressed some of those issues in different related forums. And therefore, this can be taken into account also in the telecommunication aspect and I’m certain we’ll find common ground that will ensure that national security is taken into account by sovereign governments while they are protecting their citizens.

You know when you’re talking about security, there’s always this debate. And it’s a very genuine debate, and it should address the issue of privacy; the issue of freedom of speech, without your freedom infringing the freedom of others. Those are genuine issues that need to be addressed and I believe that all parties will come to a common agreement because they will find the right wording that will really safeguard the concerns from both parties. And they are not contradictory. In those international debates, I believe that, I’ve seen many countries sometimes discussing and saying the same things, sometimes in different languages or from different cultural backgrounds. At the end of the day, with that long tradition of collaboration and consensus, ITU has been able to really find its way to put global agreements that have enabled the free flow of information as we know today.

No phone calls, no television programme, would be seen today without the standards that ITU has made – put in place. And those are global agreements that we all come to in a very cordial and friendly manner. And as I said, all parties in the ITU have been working hand in hand, and I believe that the next WCIT will come to the same type of level of agreement. I expect everyone to continue to come with a positive mind, and therefore we’ll be able to address all of the issues and all of the concerns that everyone will have. Thank you.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much Secretary-General. And as mentioned, the Secretary-General must leave now due to an unforeseen appointment which came late in the day. So thank you very much Secretary-General.

We can continue to take questions for the next 30 minutes. And the next question is from ***Stephen McClellan***d, Editor and Chief of Intermedia Journal, and he said:

* *In the opening presentation, it referred to mis-statements. Can ITU give some examples of these incorrect or deliberately misleading commentaries, or even the supposed agendas backing them?*

I think I can take that question myself. First of all, there are numerous articles that we would not have necessarily have concurred with. But as an impartial convener of this conference, it would be counter-productive to get into a rebuttal – we haven’t taken that position yet. We are happy to brief you in more detail at a future point.

Do you have other questions there? This question is:

* *Back to the question on the ITRs’ potential effects on allowing interventions on routing by governments, and including security issues regarding Internet names and numbering. The Secretary-General and Richard have answered that already. The second part of the question: the proposal by the Secretary-General (to ask the ITU Council to approve public access to WCIT documents), will it address only the core documents for the ITR review or all documents? Would it a first, and an example for future ITU processes? Can you take that Richard? Thank you.*

**Richard Hill**

I’ll take the second part first. Now it’s not a first; we have other meetings in which documents are public. The degree of the publication of the documents varies depending on the nature of the event. And in terms of the Secretary-General’s proposal, he’s basically just requesting that the appropriate body (which is Council) discuss the matter, and we will not wish to second-guess or to anticipate when the discussions will take place.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you, Richard. Another question here:

* *How many open issues remain? And how many Articles of the ITRs still have alternatives?*

**Richard Hill**

Let’s see, from memory, I think essentially all the Articles have alternatives. I think there are two minor Clauses that are agreed to be obsolete and should be deleted. But essentially, the bulk of the Articles have alternatives, and many of them have several alternatives. And as the Secretary-General mentioned, this is the normal way of working in ITU – somebody makes a proposal, somebody makes a counter proposal, somebody makes a counter-counter proposal, and a counter-counter-counter proposal. And so we end up with four or five alternatives, which are compiled. And then we go into discussion, and then we move it down to two or three alternatives, and then down to two, and then down to one, and then everybody agrees. So there’s a full range of proposals that are being made. On the misuse issue, I think there are about 12 different proposals, if my memory is correct. On others, there’s fewer.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you. We have one final question here. And indeed, we can continue the conversation via email with any of the journalists online requiring further details from us. We’re more than happy to facilitate that. And this question is regarding the contextual issues around the ITRs:

* *Is it practicable to have different sets of rules for telephone and the Internet? Is it feasible, technically, commercially or politically, however, to combine and harmonize them?*

**Richard Hill**

That’s the question that the membership is going to address. It’s not something that we are in the Secretariat can answer.

**Paul Conneally**

Thank you very much. That’s all the questions that have come in online for the moment. I want thank very much the journalists for connecting with us this evening, and this afternoon for those of you in the US. It’s the first time that we have tried this Adobe Connect facility to have a press briefing. So it would be also interesting to get your feedback on the quality of service in that respect. May I leave the final words to **Malcolm Johnson** just to close this press briefing? Thank you very much.

**Malcolm Johnson**

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I’d just like to add our thanks for your interest in this conference. And as Paul mentioned, there’s been a lot of mis-information going around. So I hope this has helped to clear some of these issues with you. And we would be very happy to answer any further questions you might like to send to us. Thank you very much.