

RESOLUTION WGPL/7 (Guadalajara, 2010)

ITU's role in child online protection

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union
(Guadalajara, 2010),

considering

- a) that the Internet is playing an increasingly important and valuable role in the provision of education for children, enriching the curriculum and helping to bridge language and other barriers between the children of all nations;
- b) that the Internet has become a major platform for many different kinds of educational, cultural and entertainment activities for children;
- c) that children are among the most active participants online;
- d) that parents, guardians and educators are not always aware of children's activities on the Internet;
- e) that there is an urgent need and global demand for the protection of children from exploitation and exposure to danger and deception when using the Internet or information and communication technology (ICT), given that these innocent children represent the future of humankind;
- f) the growing development, diversification and spread of access to ICTs worldwide, in particular the Internet, and the increasingly widespread use thereof by children, at times with no control or guidance;
- g) that in order to address the issue of cybersecurity for children, it is critical that proactive measures be taken in order to protect children online at an international level;
- h) the requirement for a multistakeholder approach in order to promote social responsibility in the ICT sector so as to effectively make use of the variety of tools available to build confidence in the use of ICT networks and services, reducing the risks identified for children;
- i) that child online protection is a subject of valid international global interest and shall be listed in the priorities of the world community's global agenda;
- j) that child online protection involves an international collaborative network, in conjunction with other United Nations agencies and partners, for action to promote the online protection of children worldwide by providing guidance on safe online behaviour;
- k) that several governments and regional organizations are actively promoting and working towards creating a safe Internet environment for children,

recalling

- a) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all relevant United Nations resolutions regarding child protection and child online protection;
- b) that, within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the States Parties undertook to protect the child from all forms of exploitation and sexual abuse, and for that purpose, in particular, to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent a) the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; b) the exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; c) the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials (Article 34);
- c) Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, on access to information by children and protection from information and material injurious to their well-being;
- d) that pursuant to Article 10 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (New York, 2000) on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the States Parties shall take all necessary steps to strengthen international cooperation by multilateral, regional and bilateral arrangements for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible for acts involving the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism; and shall also promote international cooperation and coordination between their authorities, national and international non-governmental organizations and international organizations;
- e) that the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), in the Tunis Commitment of 2005 (§ 24), recognized the role of ICTs in the protection of children and in enhancing the development of children, urging Member States to strengthen action to protect children from abuse and defend their rights in the context of ICTs, emphasizing that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration; accordingly, the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society (§ 90 q)) set forth the commitment to using ICTs as a tool to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, by, *inter alia*, incorporating regulatory, self-regulatory and other effective policies and frameworks to protect children and young people from abuse and exploitation through ICTs into national plans of action and e-strategies;
- f) the memorandum of understanding between the secretariat of the Union and Child Helpline International (CHI);

g) that Resolution 1305 adopted by the 2009 session of the Council, on the role of the Dedicated Group in identifying Internet-related public policy issues, has in its Annex 1 identified protecting children and young people from abuse and exploitation as one of the public policy issues that fall within the scope of ITU's work on international Internet-related public policy matters;

h) Resolution 1306 adopted by the 2009 session of the Council, under which a child online protection working group was set up, with the participation of Member States and Sector Members, and its mandate was defined by the ITU members in close collaboration with the secretariat of the Union;

i) Resolution 67 (Hyderabad, 2010) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on the role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in child online protection;

j) Resolution 45 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010) of WTDC, on mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam, which encompasses child online protection,

recognizing

a) that ITU is the moderator/facilitator for Action Line C5 (Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs);

b) that the Child Online Protection (COP) initiative was presented to the High-Level Segment of the Council in 2008, where it was endorsed by the Heads of State, ministers and heads of international organizations globally;

c) that the year-long Call for Action launched by the ITU Secretary-General on 18 May 2009 to consider 2009-2010 to be child online safety year;

d) that ITU, in collaboration with its COP members, has created four sets of guidelines for the protection of children in cyberspace, namely: Guidelines for children, Guidelines for parents, guardians and educators, Guidelines for industry and Guidelines for policy-makers;

e) that, although it would have been desirable to have a global telephone number for child online protection, due to technical difficulties, a single globally harmonized number is not possible, as provided in Rec. ITU-T E.164/Suppl.5 (11/2009),

taking into account

a) the discussions and observations made at the meetings of the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection (WG-COP);

b) that the 2009 World Telecommunication Information Society Day (WTISD-09) was celebrated under the theme "Protecting children in cyberspace", and aimed to raise global awareness for ensuring that children can safely access the Internet,

resolves

1 that ITU should continue the COP initiative as a platform to raise awareness on child online safety issues;

2 that ITU should continue providing assistance and support to the Member States, especially developing countries, in developing and implementing roadmaps for the COP initiative;

3 that there should be coordination amongst all relevant ITU groups on the issues related to child protection online,

requests the Council

to maintain WG-COP, in order to facilitate the membership's input and guidance on ITU's role in child online protection,

instructs the Secretary-General

1 to deploy greater efforts to ascertain the activities carried out by other United Nations organizations in this domain, and to coordinate with them appropriately, with the objective of establishing partnerships to maximize and synergize efforts in this important area;

2 to also coordinate ITU activities with other similar initiatives being undertaken at the national, regional and international levels, in order to eliminate possible overlaps;

3 to bring this resolution to the attention of other COP members and of the United Nations Secretary-General, with the aim of increasing the engagement of the United Nations system in child online protection;

4 to submit a progress report on the results of implementation of this resolution to the next plenipotentiary conference,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to carry out the activities for ensuring the implementation of Resolution 67 (Hyderabad, 2010), and to report annually, as appropriate, to the Council;

2 to collaborate closely with WG-COP, with the aim of avoiding duplication of efforts and maximizing outputs relevant to protecting children online,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

to encourage ITU-T Study Group 2 to continue exploring the option of introducing a single globally harmonized telephone number in the future, and Member States, for the time being, to allocate telephone number on regional basis for child online protection,

invites Member States

- 1 to join and participate actively in WG-COP and related ITU activities, for the purposes of a comprehensive discussion and exchange of information on legal, technical, organizational and procedural issues, as well as capacity building and international cooperation for protecting children online;
- 2 to develop information, to educate and to create consumer-awareness campaigns aimed at parents, teachers, industry and the population in general, in order to make children aware of the risks that may be encountered online,

invites Sector Members

to participate actively in WG-COP and in other ITU activities, with the aim of informing the ITU membership about technological solutions for protecting children online.