



**DECISION 498**

(approved at the eleventh Plenary Meeting)

**Third World Telecommunication Policy Forum**

The Council,

*considering*

Resolution 2 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Minneapolis, 1998), on the maintaining of the Policy Forum in order to discuss and exchange views and information on telecommunication policy and regulatory matters, especially on global and cross-sectoral issues,

*noting*

- a) the Report of the Secretary-General, as contained in Council Document C2000/3;
- b) the experiences gained from the previous Policy Fora, on Global Mobile Personal Communications by Satellite (1996) and on Trade in Telecommunications (1998),

*considering further*

- a) that Internet Protocol (IP) Telephony is one of the topics of high-current interest to ITU Member States and Sector Members;
- b) that the development of IP Telephony also has significant implications for several domains, particularly for human resource development, especially in developing countries,

*decides*

1 to convene the third World Telecommunication Policy Forum in Geneva from 7-9 March 2001 in order to discuss and exchange views on the theme of Internet Protocol (IP) Telephony, with the following draft agenda:

- a) the general implications of IP Telephony for the ITU membership with respect to:
  - the telecommunications policies and regulations of ITU Member States;
  - the implications of IP Telephony for developing countries, particularly with respect to policies and regulatory frameworks, as well as technical and economic aspects;
  - the impact of IP Telephony on the operations of Sector Members, notably in terms of the financial challenges and commercial opportunities it presents;

- b) actions to assist Member States and Sector Members in adapting to the changes in the telecommunication environment due to the emergence of IP Telephony, including analysing the current situation (e.g. by case studies) and formulating possible cooperative actions involving ITU Member States and Sector Members to facilitate adaptation to the new environment;
  - c) actions to assist Member States and Sector Members in meeting the human resource development challenges presented by new telecommunication technologies such as IP Telephony, in particular, skills shortages and the need for education, and technology transfer;
- 2 that the Forum shall draw up a report and, if possible, opinions for consideration by ITU Members and relevant ITU meetings;
- 3 that arrangements for the third WTPF shall be similar to those of the previous Fora. In particular:
- a) discussions shall be based on a report from the Secretary-General, incorporating the contributions of ITU Member States and Sector Members, which will serve as the sole working document of the Forum, and shall focus on key issues on which it would be desirable to reach conclusions;
  - b) the final report of the Secretary-General shall be circulated at least six weeks before the opening of the Policy Forum;
  - c) the report of the Secretary-General shall be developed in the following manner:
    - i) the Secretary-General shall convene a balanced, informal group of experts, each of whom is active in preparing for the Policy Forum in his/her own country, to assist in this process;
    - ii) a first draft of the report shall be circulated, based on available material, with an invitation to comment, not later than four months before the opening of the Forum;
    - iii) a second draft, incorporating comment from the membership, with an invitation to comment, shall be circulated ten weeks before the opening of the Forum;
  - d) participation in the Forum shall be open to Member States, Sector Members and small and medium-sized enterprises with attendance, as observers, by the public;
  - e) the Secretary-General shall encourage ITU Member States, Sector Members and other interested parties, to make voluntary contributions to help defray the costs of the Policy Forum and facilitate the attendance of the LDCs;
  - f) Forum Meetings should be conducted in line with the Rules of Procedure used at the previous two Fora.

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