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| **Regional Preparatory Meeting  for WTDC-17 for Americas (RPM-AMS)** | P:\SUP\Logos\Post-150th Anniv\ITU-logo-UNblue.jpg | |
| **Asuncion, Paraguay, 22-24 February 2017** | | |
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|  | **Document** **RPM-AMS17/****26-E** | |
| **8 February 2017** | |
| **Original:** **English/Spanish** | |
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| **Republic of Paraguay** | | |
| DRAFT MODIFICATION OF RESOLUTION 23 – Internet access and availability for developing countries and charging principles  for international Internet connection | | |

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| **Priority area:**  Streamlining WTDC Resolutions  **Summary:**  Draft modification of Resolution 23 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) on "Internet access and availability for developing countries and charging principles for international Internet connection".  **Expected results:**  This document is submitted to RPM-AMS for consideration.  **References:**  Resolution 23 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) |

RESOLUTION 23 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)

**Internet access and availability for developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1) and charging principles for international Internet connection**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Dubai, 2014),

recalling

a) Resolution 64 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on non-discriminatory access to modern telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, services and applications, including applied research and transfer of technology, on mutually agreed terms;

b) Resolution 101 (Rev.Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on Internet Protocol (IP)-based networks;

c) Resolution 139 (Rev. Busán, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society;

d) Resolution 37 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of World Telecommunication Development Conference on Bridging the digital divide;

e Resolution 69 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), on non-discriminatory access and use of Internet resources, inviting Member States to refrain from taking any unilateral and/or discriminatory actions that could impede another Member State from accessing public Internet sites and using the resources, within the spirit of Article 1 of the ITU Constitution and the principles of the World Summit on the Information Society;

e) the provisions of § 50 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, recognizing the particular concerns among developing countries that charges for international Internet connectivity should be better balanced to enhance access, and calling for the development of strategies for increasing affordable global connectivity, thereby facilitating improved and equitable access for all, by the means described in the said paragraph, especially items a), b), c), d), e), f) and g) thereof;

f) the four targets set by the Broadband Commission for Digital Development for making broadband universal and boosting affordability and uptake thereof, namely: making broadband policy universal; making broadband affordable; connecting homes to broadband; and getting people online;

g) Opinion 1 (Geneva, 2013) of the World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF), which expresses the view that enabling the interconnection of international, national and regional networks through Internet exchange points (IXPs) may be an effective way to improve international Internet connectivity and to reduce the costs of such connectivity, with regulation only when necessary to promote competition, and invites Member States and Sector Members to work in a collaborative manner to do a number of things, including to promote public policies aimed at permitting the local, regional and international Internet network operators to interconnect through IXPs,

noting

a) that Recommendation ITU-T D.50, on international Internet connection, recommends that administrations take appropriate measures nationally to ensure that parties (including operating agencies authorized by Member States) involved in the provision of international Internet connections negotiate and agree to bilateral commercial arrangements, or other arrangements as agreed between administrations, enabling direct international Internet connections that take into account the possible need for compensation between them for the value of elements such as traffic flow, number of routes, geographical coverage and cost of international transmission, and the possible application of network externalities, among others;

b) the rapid growth of the Internet and IP-based international services;

c) that international Internet connections remain subject to commercial agreements between the parties concerned, although Internet service provider (ISP) operators from developing countries have expressed concerns that such agreements have not achieved the required balance in regard to charges between developed and developing countries;

d) that the composition of costs for operators, whether regional or local, is, in part, significantly dependent on the type of connection (transit or peering) and the availability and cost of backhaul and long-haul infrastructure;

e) that the cost of transit is an obstacle for development of the Internet in developing countries;

f) that Opinion 1 (Geneva, 2013) considered that the establishment of IXPs is a priority to address connectivity issues, improve quality of service and reduce interconnection costs; and that IXPs and telecommunication traffic exchange points may play a relevant role in the deployment of Internet infrastructure and reaching the overall goals of improving quality, increasing the connectivity and resilience of networks, fostering competition and reducing the costs of interconnection;

g) that access to information and sharing and creation of knowledge contribute significantly to strengthening economic, social and cultural development, thus helping countries to reach the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, a process which can be enhanced by removing barriers to universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to information;

h) that continuing technical and economic development require ongoing studies in this area by the relevant ITU Sectors, in particular best practices for reducing the cost of international Internet connectivity (transit and peering);

i) that efficient networks and costs enable increased traffic volumes, economies of scale and a shift from transit connections to peering arrangements where appropriate;

j) that a rise in the costs of international connectivity will result in delayed access to and benefit from the Internet;

k) that the disparities in ICT development between countries remain substantial, ICT Development Index (IDI) values being on average twice as high in developed compared to developing countries,

l) that could be the case in which taxes of a Member State; especially transit countries, that applies to parties operating at the national level (Including recognized private operating agencies) are transferred via tariffs to the parties (Including recognized private operating agencies) that are operating abroad under the rules of another Member State

recognizing

a) that commercial initiatives by service providers have the potential to deliver cost savings for Internet access, for example through the development of more local content and the optimization of Internet traffic routing patterns in a manner that provides for a greater proportion of traffic to be routed locally;

b) that the development of an information society requires not only the deployment of appropriate technical infrastructure but also measures to promote availability of local content, applications and services, in a range of languages and at affordable prices, while providing access to remotely available content regardless of location,

taking into account

that, as part of the work of Study Group 3 of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), on tariff and accounting principles including related telecommunication economic and policy issues, a rapporteur group has been set up for the new study period (2013-2016) for the purpose of drafting a supplement to Recommendation ITU-T D.50, that promotes the evolution of prices of NGN networks, in addition to the creation and connection of regional IXPs, to reduce the costs of international connections to the internet for developing countries,

invites ITU-D Study Group 1

to take into account the content of this resolution when conducting studies related to charging of NGN networks, to reduce the costs of international connections to the Internet and to maintain close cooperation with ITU-T Study Group 3

resolves to invite Member States

1 to support the work of ITU‑T in monitoring the application of Recommendation ITU‑T D.50, bearing in mind the importance of this issue of international Internet connection costs in the developing countries;

2 to make progress in the coordination of regional policies in order to reduce international Internet connection costs, by agreeing on specific measures that will lead to an improvement in conditions for developing countries, including the deployment of regional IXPs;

3 to create policy conditions for effective competition in the international Internet backbone network access market as well as in the domestic Internet access service market, as an important factor for lowering the cost of Internet access for users and service providers;

4 to implement the Tunis Agenda in this respect, particularly § 50 thereof,

reaffirms

its resolution in the quest to continue to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that information and communication technologies (ICTs) can offer, by recalling that governments, as well as the private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the information society; and encourage international and regional cooperation,

*recommends to Member States*

to take appropriate measures at the national level to ensure that parties (including recognized private operating agencies) involved in the provision of international connections and subject to an impositive duty or fiscal tax or other on such specific supply of international connections, do not deduct such duty or tax from the other parties residing abroad (including recognized operating agencies) that receive the provision of international connections.

*urges regulators*

to promote such measures as may be considered appropriate to foster an improvement in conditions for service providers, including small and medium-sized ISPs and incumbent network access service providers, with a focus on reducing connectivity costs as referred to in *noting c), d), f)* and*i)* above,

*urges service providers*

to negotiate and agree to bilateral commercial arrangements enabling direct international Internet connections that take into account the possible need for compensation between them for the value of elements such as, *inter alia*, traffic flow, number of routes, geographical coverage and the cost of international transmission,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to organize and coordinate activities that promote information sharing among regulators on the relationship between charging arrangements for international Internet connection and the affordability of international Internet infrastructure development in developing and least developed countries, through cooperation with ITU‑T in this matter, by giving the necessary priority to the relevant study Questions in the work under the programme concerned;

2to undertake studies on the structure of international Internet connection costs for developing countries, with emphasis on the influence and effects of the connection mode (transit and peering), secure cross-border connectivity and the availability and cost of backhaul and long-haul physical infrastructure;

3to coordinate actions to provide training and technical assistance in order to encourage and promote the creation and development of regional interconnection infrastructure as a platform for exchanging Internet traffic between developing countries.

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1. These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)