**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

Ref.:   BDT/DIR/DM/239-DSM   Geneva, 12 May 2017

To ITU-D Sector Members

**Subject: World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17), Hilton Hotel,
Buenos Aires, Argentina, 9 to 20 October 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to the ITU Secretary-General's invitation letter of 6 July 2016 (DM-16/1008 – SG/BDT), I have great pleasure in providing herewith information on organizational and practical arrangements for the forthcoming World Telecommunication Development Conference, to be held at the Hilton Hotel, Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 9 to 20 October 2017.

World telecommunication development conferences (WTDCs) are convened every four years in the period between two Plenipotentiary Conferences to consider topics, projects and programmes relevant to telecommunication development. WTDCs set the strategies and objectives for the development of telecommunication and information and communication technology (ICT), providing direction and guidance to the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D).

Like at previous WTDCs, the High-Level Segment at WTDC-17 will provide a unique platform for high-ranking officials from Member States to express their views on emerging trends and on matters of strategic importance to the development of telecommunications and information and communication technologies to accelerate the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is suggested that policy statements be limited to ministers, vice, deputy or assistant ministers or cabinet secretaries and speaking time be limited to three minutes with the understanding that full statements will be posted on the website of the conference.

The theme of WTDC-17 is "ICT for Sustainable Development Goals" (ICT④SDGs). The draft agenda of WTDC-17, as approved by the ITU Council with the concurrence of the required majority of Member States, is contained in Annex 1 and the draft structure of the conference in Annex 2.

BDT is offering its membership a number of sponsorship packages in support of ITU-D's 25th Anniversary as well as for side events at WTDC-17. Each sponsorship package features a wide range of benefits and offers a unique opportunity to enhance sponsor visibility. All resources mobilized will be used to organize the activities of the sponsorship packages as well as to implement projects and initiatives, in particular the Regional Initiatives that will be adopted at WTDC-17. Details of all sponsorship benefits can be found at: www.itu.int/go/en/itudsponsorships

In line with ITU gender equality and mainstreaming policy and Resolution 198 (Busan, 2014) on empowerment of youth through telecommunication/ICT, I would also like to take the opportunity to encourage you to include women and young people in your delegation.

Practical details concerning registration and the procedure and deadline for the submission of contributions can be found in Annex 3.

Mr Yushi Torigoe, Deputy to the Director, BDT, is at your disposal should you require further information. Tel: +41 22 730 5784, Fax: +41 22 730 5484, E-mail: WTDC-17@itu.int.

I look forward to your participation and contributions to ensure that the Declaration, Strategic Plan, and Action Plan to be adopted by WTDC-17 will be effective and viable tools to guide our work in the coming years to meet the needs of all countries based on agreed priorities and strategies.

Yours faithfully,

Brahima Sanou
Director

Annex 1

Draft agenda of WTDC-17

I. Report on the implementation of the Dubai Action Plan

1. Sharing success stories and lessons learned from implementing the Dubai Action Plan

2. Report of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group

3. Report of Study Groups

4. Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work:

    a. Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-14)

    b. Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-15)/World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-15)

    c. World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-16)

5. ITU-D contribution to World Summit on the Information Society action lines

II. ICT policies and strategies for achieving Sustainable Development Goals

Ministerial and Industry leaders' roundtables

III. ITU-D work plan for 2018-2021

1. Outcomes of Regional Preparatory Meetings for WTDC-17

2. ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan for 2020-2023

3. ITU-D Action Plan for 2018-2021

4. WTDC-17 Declaration

5. Telecommunication Development Advisory Group

    a. Authorization for the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group to act between world telecommunication development conferences (Resolution 24, Rev. Dubai, 2014)

    b. Structure and working methods

6. Study Groups

    a. Study Questions

    b. Structure and working methods

7. Resolutions and recommendations

8. Financing mechanisms for ICT development

    a. Partnerships

    b. Role of the private sector

9. Any other business

Annex 2

Draft Structure of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17)

Meeting of heads of delegation

Terms of reference: in accordance with No. 49 of the General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union, the inaugural meeting of the conference shall be preceded by a meeting of heads of delegation. At this meeting, the heads of delegation shall prepare the agenda for the first plenary meeting and make proposals for the organization, chairmanships and vice-chairmanships of the conference, its committees and, as appropriate, working group(s) of the Plenary.

During WTDC, the heads of delegation shall meet to consider the proposals concerning the work programme and the constitution of study groups in particular, and to draw up proposals concerning the designation of chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups, TDAG and any other groups established by WTDC.

Committee 1: Steering Committee

Terms of reference: to coordinate all matters connected with the smooth execution of work and to plan the order and number of meetings, avoiding overlapping wherever possible in view of the limited number of members of some delegations.

This committee is composed of the Chairman, and the Vice-Chairmen of the conference and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the committees and working group(s) of the Plenary.

Committee 2: Budget Control

Terms of reference: to determine the organization and facilities available to the delegates, to examine and approve the accounts for expenditure incurred throughout the duration of the conference and to report to the plenary meeting on the estimated total expenses of the conference, and the estimated financial needs of ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) up to the next World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) and the costs entailed by the execution of the decisions taken by the Conference.

Committee 3: Objectives

Terms of reference: to review and approve the agenda and make proposals for the organization of work; to review and approve the outputs and outcomes for the objectives; to review and agree on the related study group questions and related regional initiatives and establish appropriate guidelines for their implementation; to review and agree on relevant resolutions; and to ensure that the output is in accordance with a results-based management approach aiming to improve management effectiveness and accountability.

Committee 4: ITU-D Working Methods

Terms of reference: to review and approve the agenda and make proposals for the organization of work; to examine proposals and contributions relating to cooperation among members; to evaluate the working methods and functioning of the ITU-D study groups and Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG); to assess and identify options for maximizing programme delivery and to approve appropriate changes thereto with a view to strengthening the synergies between study group questions, programmes and regional initiatives; and to submit to the plenary meeting reports, including proposals on the ITU-D working methods for implementation of the ITU-D work programme, on the basis of TDAG and study group reports submitted to the conference and the proposals of ITU Member States, ITU-D Sector Members and Academia.

Committee 5: Editorial Committee

Terms of reference: to perfect the wording of texts arising from WTDC deliberations, such as resolutions, without altering the sense and substance, and align the texts in the official languages of the Union, with a view to their submission for approval to the plenary meetings.

Furthermore, it is suggested to set up a Working Group of the Plenary as follows:

Working Group of the Plenary: ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan 2020-2023, WTDC Declaration

Terms of reference: to draw up a draft WTDC Declaration and the input of the ITU-D Sector to the Union's strategic plan to be adopted at the next Plenipotentiary Conference.

Explanatory note

In accordance with No. 63 of the General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union, the plenary meeting of the World Telecommunication Development Conference may set up committees to consider matters referred to the conference.

Annex 3

Organizational arrangements

I.   Invitation, admission and participation

The Secretary-General, after consulting the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), sends an invitation to the administration of each Member State, to the ITU-D Sector Members, to the organizations and institutions referred to in the relevant provisions of Article 25 of the ITU Convention as well as to Palestine in accordance with Resolution 99 (Rev. Busan, 2014) and to Academia in accordance with Resolution 169 (Rev. Busan, 2014). This invitation was sent in July 2016.

Credentials to attend WTDC-17 are not needed. However, any Member State or Sector Member intending to send a delegation or representatives to WTDC-17 shall so inform the Director of BDT indicating the names and functions of all members of the delegation or of the representatives (N°. 339 of the ITU Convention).

To ensure that the necessary arrangements can be made in a timely fashion, Member States and Sector Members wishing to participate in WTDC-17 and organizations, agencies and other entities that are eligible to attend as observers under Article 25 of the ITU Convention or Resolution 99 (Rev. Busan, 2014) or Resolution 169 (Rev. Busan, 2014) are requested to register online.

II.   Registration

Registration will be carried out exclusively online through focal points designated by each administration and entity entitled to participate in the conference.

The role of designated focal points is to handle registration formalities for their respective administrations and entities. The list of focal points can be accessed using TIES log-in credentials at the following address: http://www.itu.int/go/itudreg

Designated focal points can register from the following link: http://www.itu.int/go/itudreg
If your entity does not have a focal point, please contact our delegate's registration service at: RegistrationWTDC-17@itu.int.

Onsite registration and badging at the Hilton Hotel, Buenos Aires, will start three days prior to the opening of the conference.

III. Provisional organization of the conference

WTDC-17 will set up committees to conduct its work. A draft structure of the conference is to be found in Annex 2, along with suggested terms of reference for the committees and for the Working Group of the Plenary.

IV.   Documents for the conference

The following preparatory documents will be published:

- Report on the implementation of the Dubai Action Plan.
- Report on the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group activities.
- Report on the regional preparatory meetings for WTDC-17.
- Draft ITU-D Contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan for 2020-2023.
- Draft ITU-D Action Plan for 2018-2021.

- Draft WTDC-17 Declaration.
- Rules of Procedure of ITU-D (WTDC Resolution 1).
- Report on streamlining WTDC Resolutions.
- Reports by the Study Group Chairmen.
- Report on ITU-D Contributions to WSIS Action Lines
- Contributions by Member States and ITU-D Sector Members to WTDC-17.

In compliance with Council Resolution 1141 and PP-14 Resolution 154, work of WTDC-17 will be conducted in as a paperless manner as possible. Each participant will be encouraged to upload a sync application that will automatically synchronize with the ITU FTP document server to allow participants to have at hand at any time all published documents of the conference in any of the six official ITU languages that are available. In addition, a local document server will be set up at the venue to allow for immediate access to all published documents of the conference in any of the six official ITU languages that are available.

Documents will be available on the WTDC-17 website at http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC17/Pages/default.aspx.

Participants are therefore requested to bring their laptops. For those with no laptop, a cybercafé will be available to download and print documents, as required, on a self-service basis.

V.   Contributions

To allow for thorough consideration by delegations, **contributions should be submitted preferably two months before the opening of WTDC-17 (i.e. by Tuesday 8 August 2017).** In any event and in accordance with Resolution 1 on the Rules of Procedure of the Telecommunication Development Sector (Rev. Dubai, 2014), contributions should be submitted **not later than 30 calendar days (i.e. by Saturday 9 September 2017)** in order to guarantee their timely translation**.** In line with this Resolution and Resolution 165 (Guadalajara, 2010), the firm submission deadline for all contributions to WTDC-17 shall be no later than **14 calendar days** before the opening of the conference **(i.e. by Monday 25 September 2017 at 2359 hours Geneva time)**.

Contributions should be submitted by electronic means using the system indicated below. Should you require any clarification or guidance, please contact the WTDC-17 secretariat at: wtdc.documentcontrol@itu.int.

Member States and Sector Members are urged to give careful attention to the initial preparation of contributions so as to avoid revisions to documents.

VI. Processing of contributions prior to the conference

In order to consolidate the various contributions submitted in a way that lends itself to the elaboration of a solid, cohesive package consisting of inter-related and mutually reinforcing components, a web-based tool known as Conference Proposals Interface (CPI) is being made available to members and can be accessed at the following link: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/Pages/WTDC-Conference-Proposal-Interface.aspx. A User Guide along with Guidelines for the preparation of proposals are also available at this link.

In addition to providing a common approach to submitting contributions, CPI will also provide a fast-track to the processing of the input documents by reducing the reformatting of the contributions. Contributions not submitted through CPI may result in delays in their processing and posting.

Members who have submitted proposals to other major ITU events, such as the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2014 (PP-14), the World Radiocommunication Conference 2015 (WRC-15), or the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2016 (WTSA-16), are already familiar with CPI. For any queries regarding CPI, please contact the WTDC-17 secretariat at: wtdc.documentcontrol@itu.int.

In accordance with No. 42 of the General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union, contributions containing more than one proposal should be submitted with a number to identify each proposal along with the topic of the proposal. The secretariat will annotate each proposal with index numbers composed as follows:

ABC/25/3

where ABC is the symbol of the country that is the author of the proposal, 25 is the number of the document in which the proposal will be published and 3 is the serial number of the proposal within that document. The three-letter code and document number will be included by the secretariat. However, the numbering of each proposal will be assigned by the online system when submitting each proposal.

On the basis of the contributions received by the deadline, BDT will allocate the documents based on the topics identified by the submitting administration in order to facilitate discussion at WTDC-17.

VII. Processing of contributions during the conference

Owing to the limited duration of the conference, substantive debate should take precedence over the systematic presentation of individual proposals. For ease of referencing during the discussions, the secretariat will prepare a temporary document listing all the contributions with cross-references to the different items on the agenda. Member States are strongly encouraged not to submit new contributions during the conference.

VIII.   Length limit for the submission of contributions

In the spirit of Resolution 154 (Rev. Busan, 2014), it is encouraged to limit the length of contributions. In this regard, a contribution should not exceed five (5) pages, and should be submitted to the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau.

In the case of a more detailed contribution that significantly exceeds the length limit, an executive summary should be submitted. Only the executive summary will be translated if submitted within the time limit. The detailed version of the contribution will only be available in the original language.

IX. Accessibility needs

WTDC-17 will be paperless. Exceptions can be made upon request for persons with disabilities. Please request, as soon as possible, any reasonable specific assistance needed by e-mail to RegistrationWTDC-17@itu.int. The ITU secretariat will meet the expressed requirements to the best of its ability, subject to availability of resources.

X. ITU information/document access policy

In line with the ITU information/document access policy approved by Council 2016, information/documents will be made publicly accessible, unless the submitter of the document advises the ITU secretariat otherwise. This new policy entered into force on a provisional basis on 1 January 2017 pending final approval by the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2018.

The new policy is available at the following link http://www.itu.int/en/access-policy/Pages/default.aspx and underlines that ITU is committed to improving public access to information, while also protecting certain types of information where disclosure might cause potential harm to a legitimate private or public interest.

Submitters of information to ITU conferences, assemblies and meetings have the responsibility to notify the ITU secretariat if a document, or portion thereof, contains information falling into any of the categories listed in the policy or is otherwise sensitive. In those cases, submitters are encouraged to provide a redacted version for public access whenever possible.

Restricted information shall remain restricted until it no longer meets the criteria listed in the policy, or until the submitter notifies ITU that it may be made publicly available.

_____