



Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)



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Geneva, 22 February 2021

To:

- ITU Member States from the Arab region
- ITU-D Sector Members from the Arab region
- Academia from the Arab region
- Palestine (Resolution 99)
- United Nations and its Funds and Programmes
- Regional Telecommunication Organizations from the Arab region
- Intergovernmental Organizations operating satellite systems
- Specialized agencies of the United Nations

Subject: ITU Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Arab Region for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21), 7-8 April 2021, Virtual

Dear Sir/Madam,

In preparation for the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21), I am pleased to invite you to participate in the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Arab region (RPM-ARB), which will take place virtually, on 7-8 April 2021.

The WTDC takes place 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 telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICTs), providing future direction and guidance to the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). WTDC-21 will be hosted by the Government of Ethiopia and take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8 to 19 November 2021.

WTDC-21 comes at a defining moment for the world and our place in it. The COVID-19 global pandemic has brought home the stark reality that in today's world, connectivity is not just important; it is absolutely *critical*. At the same time, it is increasingly clear that the success of this final Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will largely rest on digital solutions. This makes your and our work and mandate more important than ever.

In recognition of this urgency, and in collaboration with membership through the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG), the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) has undertaken a comprehensive preparatory process. The objective of this process is to ensure that WTDC is the landmark global ICT development conference, which will drive the global development agenda with an impactful mandate for ITU and an agile and fit-for-purpose BDT for the next planning period.

To keep pace with a fast-changing environment, and to be able to respond effectively to the shifting needs of our membership, BDT has undertaken a demanding journey of change. Over the last two years, we have made substantial progress with the development of a comprehensive results-based management (RBM) framework, and the supporting theory of change building blocks, which strengthens our ability to plan and monitor impact, and demonstrate results. I trust that these changes will help orient discussions on regional priorities, and benefit the preparation of the WTDC-21.

In line with Resolution 31 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010), the RPMs aim at engaging the membership in the WTDC process in order to encourage regional coordination before the conference. RPMs also seek to identify regional topics of interest and challenges that need to be addressed to foster the development of telecommunications/ICTs, and help Member States and Sector Members set common priorities.

To facilitate effective preparations by the ITU membership, a draft RPM-ARB agenda has been attached as **Annex 1**.

Detailed information about the submission of contributions, registration and other logistical information is available in the attached **Annex 2**.

Requests for any additional information may be addressed to:

Mr Adel Darwish
ITU Regional Director for the Arab region
E-mail: ITU-RO-ArabStates@itu.int
phone: +41 79 249 4879

I look forward to your participation and contribution, which will allow WTDC-21 to become an effective and viable tool to guide our work in the coming years.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director

Attachments:

Annex 1: Draft RPM-ARB Agenda

Annex 2: Information on submission of contributions, registration and other logistical information

ANNEX 1

Draft RPM-ARB Agenda

1. Opening ceremony
2. Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman
3. Adoption of the agenda and time management plan
4. Digital Trends Arab region
5. Reporting on the implementation of the WTDC-17 Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the Regional Initiatives), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
6. Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work: PP-18, WRC-19, RA-19, and WTSA-16
7. Preparations for WTDC-21
 - 7.1 Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)
 - 7.2 Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)
 - 7.3 TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)
8. Identification of regional priority areas
9. Other business

ANNEX 2

Information on submission of contributions, registration and other logistical information**Registration, access and participation**

Registration for RPM-ARB will be carried out **exclusively online and opened on 3 February 2021**.

Each delegate interested in attending the meeting should complete and submit a [registration form that can be accessed here](#).

Delegates can register for the meeting using their ITU user account credentials (i.e. username and password). In case they do not have an ITU user account, they can create one by following the steps available [HERE](#). A User account with TIES access allows delegates to access ITU information resources including contributions and other working documents.

Note: For delegates who already created their user account when registering to previous events on this same system can still use the same account.

All registration requests for participation in RPM-ARB must be **validated by the Designated Focal Points (DFPs)** of administrations and entities entitled to participate. The list of Designated Focal Points is available [HERE](#). To modify the contact details of a Designated Focal Point or to change the Designated Focal Point, an official letter from an authorized official should be sent to the BDT Meetings Registration Service (by fax: +41 22 730 5545/+41 22 730 5484 or by e-mail to: bdtmeetingsregistration@itu.int), providing the new DFP's last name, first name and e-mail address.

Membership is encouraged to consider gender balance when deciding their delegations to RPM-ARB.

Interpretation

Participants to RPM-ARB are invited to select upon registration **by 21 February 2021**, the language they require interpretation in.

Access to the virtual meeting room and captioning

Information to access the virtual meeting room will be provided to duly registered participants through a separate email.

Only those participants duly registered for the meeting will be able to access the virtual meeting room.

The standard captioning service will be provided through the virtual meeting room. For those participants wishing to access the captioning script directly, the link will be available at the [RPM-ARB webpage](#).

Contributions to RPM-ARB

As per WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), contributions should not exceed five pages and must be submitted using the online template available at the [RPM-ARB webpage](#).

Please attach the original "Word" version of your contribution to the online submission form to ensure that all hyperlinks, graphics and tables are correctly displayed.

In accordance with provision 13.1 of WTDC Resolution 1, contributions for RPMs must be received no later than 30 calendar days before the start of the event, that is by **8 March 2021 (2359 hours, Geneva time)**, in order to be translated for the meeting.

Contributions that do not meet this 30-day deadline but are received at least 14 calendar days before the opening of the meeting (i.e., by 24 March 2021) shall be published but not translated.

Contributions received less than 14 calendar days before the meeting shall not be included on the agenda.

Documentation

All documents will be posted on the [RPM-ARB webpage](#).

Delegates are asked to ensure that they have TIES access rights to be able to access the documents for the RPM-ARB through the website. Information on how to request TIES access rights can be found at <http://www.itu.int/TIES/>.

Summary of deadlines

Date of RPM-ARB	Deadline to request interpretation (-45 days)	Deadline to submit contributions with guaranteed translation (-30 days)	Final deadline for submission of contributions without translation (-14 days)
7-8 April 2021	21 February 2021	8 March 2021	24 March 2021
