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|  | **Second Inter-Regional Meeting (IRM-2) to prepare for the WTDC-21Virtual, 13-14 December 2021** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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|  | **Document** **IRM21-2/46-E** |
|  | **28 April 2021** |
|  | **Original: English and Russian** |
| Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC) |
| Draft revision of Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) “Bridging the digital divide” |
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| **Agenda item:** Item 6.c**Summary:**This contribution is proposed to revise the text of Resolution 37 of WTDC to streamline the text of Resolution with latest activities.**Expected results:**This document, contained a draft RCC Common proposal, has been submitted to the RPM-CIS (April 2021) for information.**Reference:**Tunis Agenda for the Information Society;Article 1 on the objectives of ITU and Article 21 on the functions and structure of the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) of the ITU Constitution |

RESOLUTION 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)

**Bridging the digital divide**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 2017),

*a* telecommunications/information and communication technologies()

*b)* that the digital divide is characterized by inequality in the technical and economic availability of telecommunication/ICT facilities and services, as well as in the level of awareness and skills required to use them;

*c*World Summit for Information Society ()

*d*that Telecommunication/telecommunication/

*e*

## recalling

*a)* United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 70/1, on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

*b)* UNGA Resolution 70/125, on the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS);

*c)* Resolution 135 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on ITU’s role in the development of telecommunications/information communications technologies (ICT), in providing technical assistance and advice to developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1)1 and in implementing relevant national, regional and interregional projects;

*d)* Resolution 139 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/ICTs to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society;

*e)* Resolution 200 (Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the Connect 2020 Agenda for global telecommunication/ICT development;

*f)* Resolution 16 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of this conference, on special actions and measures for the least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and countries with economies in transition;

## recalling further

*a)* the provisions of the Tunis Agenda for the information society, defining Action Lines falling under ITU's responsibility;

*b*

*c)* Article 1 on Purposes of the Union and Article 21 on Functions and Structure of Telecommunication Development Sector of ITU Constitution,

## acknowledging

*a)* that the telecommunication environment has undergone significant changes in recent years and that progress has been made in implementing the outputs of Phases 1 and 2 of WSIS;

b) that ITU has committed itself to narrowing the digital divide in accordance with the WSIS outcomes, as well as the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

*c*Dubai82023telecommunication/

*d*

## acknowledging further

*a)* ITU's role as a catalyst, and in particular that of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D) as coordinator and promoter of the rational use of resources in the context of the various projects intended to narrow the digital divide;

*b*

*c*

## considering

*a*

*b*

*d)* that each region, country and area should tackle its own specific issues regarding the digital divide, while stressing the importance of cooperation in this area at regional and international level in order to benefit from experience gained;

## considering further

*a)* that it is important to promote openness of telecommunications/ICTs for all, access to telecommunication/ICT services, their technical and economic availability, use in all countries and regions, as well as by all people, including women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples , elderly people and people with disabilities and special needs;

*b*in particular many developing countries do not have the necessary basic infrastructure, long‑term plans, laws, appropriate regulations and such like in place for telecommunication/ICT development

## confirms

the importance of approaches to funding for bridging the digital divide in the Geneva Plan of Action, the Tunis Agenda and the strategic plan for the Union and their translation into equitable mechanisms for action, particularly in respect of issues related to Internet management, having regard to women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, the elderly and persons with disabilities and special needs, telecommunications/ICTs for disaster relief and mitigation, and the child online protection initiative,

## undertakes

to carry out work from which all countries, especially the developing countries, may benefit, with a view to establishing international methods and specific mechanisms to strengthen international cooperation for bridging the digital divide, through connectivity solutions which support sustainable and affordable access to telecommunication/ICTs, and, in parallel, to continue to shorten the time-frames for implementation of the Digital Solidarity Agenda, beginning with the Geneva Plan of Action, the outcomes of the Connect the World summits, the Tunis Agenda and the strategic plan for the Union,

## resolves

that BDT, in collaboration with the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau and the Radiocommunication Bureau, continue to adopt the necessary measures to implement regional projects derived from the non-exclusive integration models which it has acquired, to link all stakeholders, organizations and institutions of the various sectors in an ongoing relationship of cooperation in which information is disseminated over networks, so as to narrow the digital divide in line with the outputs of Phases 1 and 2 of WSIS,

## resolves to request the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1

2telecommunication/in order to bridge the digital divide;

3 to continue to follow up BDT’s work pursuant to Resolution 8 (Rev. Addis Ababa, 2021) of this conference in creating social connectivity indicators for the digital divide, standard indicators for each country and a single index, in cooperation with the competent organizations and the relevant United Nations agencies, using available statistics so that information on the current situation for each country and region in terms of the digital divide is continuously available online on the ITU website in a clear and user-friendly manner;

4 to continue to advocate the advantages of developing low‑cost, high‑quality telecommunication/ICT customer equipment, that can be directly connected to the networks supporting the Internet and Internet services and applications, so that economies of scale and social benefit can be achieved on account of their acceptability at the global level, taking into consideration the possibility of satellite use of this equipment;

5,

6inviting Sector Members

7 to continue to foster the development of innovative models in order to reduce poverty and bridge the digital divide in the developing countries successfully;

8telecommunication/ICT telecommunication/

9 bridging the digital divide between urban and rural areas

10women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, the elderly and and special needs telecommunication/

11

2bridging the digital divide

13

14 to continue to identify key telecommunication/ICT applications in rural areas and to cooperate with toe, in particular with a view to developing a standardized user‑friendly content format that overcomes the barrier of literacy and language;

5 e

16 to continue to take measures to develop cooperation with the international financial institutions, donor agencies and private sector associations regarding projects aimed at bridging the digital divide, as well as inform Member States of the status of these efforts on a regular basis;

17 comply with this Resolution

18the implementation of this Resolution

## invites

international financial institutions, donor agencies and private‑sector entities to assist and to develop different business models in developing telecommunication/ICT applications referred to in WSIS Action Line C7, including public-private partnership projects and programmes in developing countries,

## invites Member States

1 to consider promoting relevant policies to foster public and private investment in the development and construction of radiocommunication systems, including satellite systems, in their countries and regions, and to consider including the use of such systems in their national and/or regional broadband plans, as an additional tool that will help to bridge the digital divide and meet telecommunication needs, especially in the developing countries;

2 when implementing Resolution 17 (Rev. Addis Ababa, 2021) of this conference, on implementation of regionally approved initiatives at the national, regional, interregional and global levels, consider the possibility of implementing projects in the framework of regional initiatives on bridging the digital divide that reflects optimal integration of telecommunication/ICTs;

3 to participate actively in regional and global collaborative forums dealing with experiences and best practices in the implementation of e-government strategies and programmes;

## invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to support the collection and analysis of data and statistics on e‑applications and services, such as telecommunication/ICT applications in industry, e‑government and e‑health and telecommunication/ICT in education, that will contribute to public policy design and implementation as well as enabling cross-country comparisons;

2 to participate actively in regional and global collaborative forums dealing with experiences and best practices in the implementation of e-government strategies and programmes;

3 to participate in the study of the role of telecommunication/ICTs in education systems by contributing their own experiences regarding the implementation of telecommunication/ICTs for achieving universal education worldwide.

4

5 to consider expanding the implementation of projects and programs to promote international development of the telecommunication / ICT sector, including with the participation of ITU, in order to bridge the digital divide and provide information on such projects and programs for BDT.

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